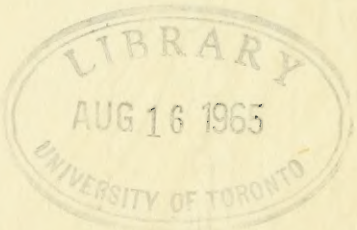
THE SHORTER BYRON

THE SHORTER BYRON

LYRICS AND OTHER POEMS:
SATIRICAL AND OCCASIONAL
VERSE : LETTERS

CHOSEN AND EDITED BY
ERNEST RHYS

LONDON
ROBERT HOLDEN & CO. LTD.
31 GOWER STREET, W.C.1
1927



Made and Printed in Great Britain
by Hazell, Watson & Viney Ld.
London and
Aylesbury

FOREWORD

In some spirited " Observations "—a reply to the attacks on *Don Juan*—Byron wrote, " The life of a writer has been said, by Pope, I believe, to be *a warfare upon earth*." So far as his own experience went, he added, there was nothing to say against the proposition. Warfare in one shape or another was written in Byron's book of destiny. It affected his boyhood, his relations with his mother, his terms at Cambridge, his marriage and his love-affairs, his wanderings in Italy and the East, and at the end a war provided the climax, and he died a world-hero. " He died," as his epitaph at Hucknall Church has it, at Missolonghi, in Western Greece, on the 19th of April, 1824, " engaged in the glorious attempt to restore that country to her ancient freedom and renown."

In this book will be found a choice of his lyrics and letters, with some added pages, what he would have called his " brief oracle "—in a word, his breviary. The service a shorter Byron, such as this, can do the modern reader, impatient of long poems and heavy literary baggage, is to recall first his personal effect—the effect he had on his contemporaries, and then those distinctive parts of his writings which to-day help us to envisage him in his living presence and still surviving poetic reality.

For the first, we can recover a prose portrait, which only needs to be coloured by some of the familiar comments in Moore's *Life and Letters* to have its full impact. " Of his face," said Tom Moore, " the beauty may be pronounced to have been of the highest order, combining regularity of features with the most varied and interesting expression. His eyes, though of a light grey, were capable of all extremes of

expression, from the most joyous hilarity to the deepest sadness, from the very sunshine of benevolence to the most concentrated scorn or rage. Of this latter passion, I had once an opportunity of seeing what fiery interpreters they could be, on my telling him, thoughtlessly enough, that a friend of mine had said to me—' Beware of Lord Byron ; he will some day or other do something very wicked.' ' Was it man or woman said so ? ' he exclaimed, suddenly turning round upon me with a look of such intense anger as, though it lasted not an instant, could not easily be forgot. But it was in the mouth and chin that the great beauty of his fine countenance lay. ' Many pictures have been painted of him,' said one of his admirers, but the excessive beauty of his lips escaped every painter. In their ceaseless play they represented every emotion."

His head, like Shelley's, we may add, was noticeably small ; and he took a girlish pride in " the glossy, dark-brown curls clustering over it." The lameness of his right foot which affected him morbidly, and continually, did not hinder his activity. He exaggerated it as a physical defect, and it may have accounted for his feverish desire to win the instant admiration of every beautiful woman he met.

There was, as Tom Moore said of his adventures on his first visit to Greece, always " that other sort of attraction " to which, wherever he went, " his heart, or rather imagination, was but too sensible." In order the better to estimate the mixture of mere fantasy with real emotion in him, we must turn to the story of his life.

Byron was born in Holles Street, London, on 22nd January, 1788, only son of a Captain of the Guards, and an Aberdeenshire heiress, Catherine Gordon of Gight. The Captain's character and the lady's prospects were satirically expressed in a frank epithalamium by a Scottish rhymer at the time, which begins :

O whare are ye gaen', bonny Miss Gordon ?
O whare are ye gaen', sae bony an' braw ?
Ye've married, ye've married wi' Johnny Byron,
To squander the lands o' Gight awa'.

The little lame boy, born of this prodigal's marriage—" half a Scot by birth, and bred a whole one "[1] —passed his childhood in Aberdeen, where his mother retired perforce, when the Captain had squandered her fortune, which he did very effectively. However, in his eleventh year the boy succeeded to his great uncle in the title, and mother and son took up their abode for a time at Newstead Abbey, the family seat in Sherwood Forest. His school-days were passed at Dulwich and at Harrow. He was a lazy boy at Harrow ; but he made some friendships there that lasted, and the school counted for much in his poetical make-up. His schoolboy love-affairs, too, were many, and included three Marys—Mary Chaworth, Mary of Aberdeen and " Poor Mary," who figures in his *Hours of Idleness*. He went to Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1805, and two years later appeared his first book, *Hours of Idleness*. A sharp, short criticism of the book in the *Edinburgh Review* led to his writing *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* :

> The cry is up, and scribblers are my game.
> Speed, Pegasus !—ye strains of great and small,
> Ode, epic, elegy, have at you all !

This has vigour ; but much of the satire is crude : he fails usually to reach the midrib of his victim. Scott and Coleridge, two of the masters he afterwards learned most from, were among the scribblers he went for.

While people were discussing the *English Bards*, and the writer's name was being bruited about, he left England, and went to Greece and Turkey. The fruit of those first wanderings was *Childe Harold*. " I awoke one morning," he says, " and found myself famous." *The Giaour*, *The Bride of Abydos*, *The Corsair* and *Lara* quickly followed.

On his return to London, he became an idol in all sorts of society, fast and tame, when in a sober moment, or in a whim of economy and repentance, he proposed to a Northern heiress, Miss Milbanke, a much-sought-after beauty.

[1] *Don Juan.*

Twelve months after the marriage Lady Byron went back to her parents to escape from the discords and perplexities of her home in London. She refused to return, and those who knew the inwardness of the quarrel and his connection with his half-sister, Augusta, thought she was right.

Two poems, *The Siege of Corinth* and *Parisina*, written at this time, may be read in sequence to the cycle of poems to Augusta. They serve to carry on the story of his passion and his disgust with himself and the England he had shocked. Another period of travel succeeds in which he visited France, Switzerland and Italy. *Manfred*, *The Lament of Tasso* and other poems tell of his growing Italian sympathies. *Beppo* comes in 1818; and in 1820, a year of marvellous activity, he began *Don Juan*, wrote a series of dramas, and at Venice plunged into the wildest dissipation. " He associated there," said Shelley, " with wretches that seemed almost to have lost the gait and physiognomy of man."

In Italy as elsewhere abroad, especially in Venice, Byron always seemed to be looking for his own wilder qualities in his companions,—in women most of all. When he did come upon them, as in the case of Margarita Cogni, he gave himself up to them with reckless abandonment, but not without some relief of gaiety. The letter describing Margarita Cogni is one of the most expressive he ever wrote. When he has all but been lost in a sudden storm off the Lido, he writes : " On our return, after a tight struggle, I found her on the open steps of the Molenigo palace, on the Grand Canal, with her great black eyes flashing through her tears, and the long dark hair was streaming, drenched with rain, over her brows and breast. . . . Her joy at seeing me again was moderately mixed with ferocity, and gave me the idea of a tigress over her recovered cubs."

He was rescued from this and other Venetian extravagances by his connection with a young Romagnese lady, the Countess Guiccioli. This was the most lasting and, so far as his heart was concerned, the deepest of all his passions. Emilia Guiccioli (*née* Gamba) sacrificed everything for his

sake, wealth, position (her husband, who was old, had married her at seventeen). Her father and her brother, the two Counts Gamba, were reconciled to her intrigue with Byron, and became his associates in the Italian revolution of 1821 ; and the younger Count was his comrade to the last in the Greek war which led to his death. Indeed, the Italian Carbonari episodes lead on by an inevitable turn of events to that finale. They show that in his most prodigal days he kept his eyes anxiously and presciently on the movement for liberty in Europe.[1]

In his diary of 1821, written at Ravenna, we trace, through the passing glimpses of the Countess Guiccioli, the exciting record of the Italian movement in which he took an eager share. " Italy *free* ! " he writes in one of his letters,—" think of that ! " He speaks in his diary of visiting La Contessa one evening and finding her playing on the piano. Her father and her brother come in from the theatre, where they had seen a play of Alfieri's, and they fall to discussing events. Three weeks before, Byron had heard a shot in the street one night, and run out to find the Commandant Del Pinto mortally wounded there. He died in Byron's house. Another evening, we watch the Countess Guiccioli writing Byron's reply to a letter from the dead man's brother. " I had begged her to do so," he says, " because of her purer Italian, I being little skilled in the set phrase of Tuscany." They talked that night of Italy, patriotism, Alfieri and other things ; also of Sallust's conspiracy of Catiline. Presently when her father and brother come in, they bring the news that the *Romagnuole* would soon break out in active revolt. Another day, he writes in natural irritation : " The gentlemen, who make revolutions and are gone on a shooting expedition, are not yet returned . . . they have been out for five days, buffooning, while the interests of a whole country are at stake, when even they themselves

[1] This larger sense of affairs in the world stage, informing his political ideas, has been admirably studied by a recent writer, Dr. Dora Neill Raymond, whose *Political Career of Lord Byron* appeared when this volume was already on its way to press.

are compromised. . . . If this country could but be freed, what would be too great for the accomplishment of that desire? for the extinction of that Sigh of Ages? *Let us hope!*"

The Italian revolution having fizzled out, Byron in spite of his disappointment turned his whole mind, ardent as ever, to Greece. In April 1823 the Greek committee in London sent Captain Blaquière to see him and enlist his help, and he threw himself with all his resources into the Cause. But it was a struggle to do it. "Notwithstanding," writes the Countess Guiccioli, "his affection for that country, notwithstanding his often reiterated words 'that a man ought to do something more for society than write verses' ('che un uomo è obbligato a fare per la società qualche cosa di più che dei versi'), notwithstanding the fact that he intended returning to Italy in a few months,—yet every person who was near him at the time can bear witness to the struggle which his mind underwent (however he tried to hide it). . . ."

The rest of the story is told in the letters and prose extracts at the end of this book. Moore's Life gives the only further setting required. There we read how at last he sailed in the *Mistico*, for Missolonghi, Count Gamba accompanying in a larger vessel with the horses and heavy baggage. "We sailed together," says Count Gamba, in a highly picturesque and affecting passage, "till after ten at night; the wind favourable—a clear sky, the air fresh but not sharp. Our sailors sang alternately patriotic songs, monotonous indeed, but to persons in our situation extremely touching, and we took part in them. We were all, but Lord Byron particularly, in excellent spirits. The *Mistico* sailed the fastest. When the waves divided us, and our voices could no longer reach each other, we made signals by firing pistols and carabines—'To-morrow we meet at Missolonghi—to-morrow.' Thus, full of confidence and spirits, we sailed along. At twelve, we were out of sight of each other."

Two letters written at Diagomestri, January 2, 1824, carry on the story, and Moore again tells of the arrival at Missolonghi.

" The whole population of the place crowded to the shore to welcome him : the ships anchored off the fortress fired a salute as he passed ; and all the troops and dignitaries of the place, civil and military, with the Prince Mavrocordato at their head, met him on his landing, and accompanied him, amidst the mingled din of shouts, wild music, and discharges of artillery, to the house that had been prepared for him. ' I cannot easily describe,' says Count Gamba, ' the emotions which such a scene excited. I could scarcely refrain from tears.' "

From this passage turn to the lines Byron wrote, on his thirty-first birthday, " at Missolonghi, January 22, 1824 " :

> If thou regrett'st thy youth, why live ?
> The land of honourable death
> Is here :—up to the field, and give
> Away thy breath !
>
> Seek out—less often sought than found—
> A soldier's grave, for thee the best,
> Then look around and choose thy ground,
> And take thy rest.

At Missolonghi he died, on the 19th of April, 1824, leaving Greece and Italy, and indeed all Europe that was liberal in heart and mind, mourning him as a hero.

It is hard to say what Byron would have done had he lived out his full term. Perhaps for his fame, for his effect on the generations to come, it was well he did not survive, to act upon his perverse conclusion, that " Crabbe's the man "—better than Coleridge, Shelley, Keats and all the romantics, of whom he was one. That was because Crabbe was nearer than they in mode to Pope. However, in Byron's poetry, as in his life, we have to count upon his incalculable temperament, his keen reactions to every experience, to the " tender passion " as well as to poetry. Tom Moore, not an over-critical biographer, has measured this quality in one of his estimates, which is worth repeating. He is speaking of the success of *Childe Harold*, huge and instantaneous, " deep and lasting."

" There are those who trace in the peculiar character of Lord Byron's genius strong features of relationship to the times in which he lived ; who think that the great events which marked the close of the last century, by giving a new impulse to men's minds and allowing full vent to ' the flash and outbreak of fiery spirits,' had led naturally to the production of such a poet as Byron ; and that he was, in short, as much the child of the Revolution, in Poesy, as another great man of the age, Napoleon, was in warfare. The free loose given to all the passions and energies of the human mind, in the great struggle of that period, together with the constant spectacle of such astounding vicissitudes as were passing almost daily on the theatre of the world, had created in all minds a taste for strong excitement, which the stimulants supplied from ordinary sources were insufficient to gratify. Hence the poet who should breathe into his songs the fierce and passionate spirit of the age, and assert, untrammelled and unawed, the high dominion of genius, would be the most sure of an audience toned in sympathy with his strains."

Moore touches then on the other elements that went to the *Byron Legend* : " His youth, the noble beauty of his countenance, the gentleness of his voice and manner to women, and his occasional haughtiness to men—the alleged singularities of his mode of life, which kept curiosity alive and inquisitive, —all these lesser traits and habitudes concurred towards the quick spread of his fame ; nor can it be denied that, among many purer sources of interest in his Poem, the allusions which he makes to instances of *successful* passion in his career were not without their influence on the fancies of that sex, whose weakness is to be most easily won by those who come recommended by the greatest number of triumphs over others."

His rank counted in his fame, too. " I may place a great deal of it," he said to a friend in a modest moment, " to my being a lord." Tom Moore ends his pæan of hero-worship accordantly—" Byron's fame had not to wait for any of the ordinary gradations, but seemed to spring up, like the palace

of a fairy tale, in a night." We have to turn again to *Childe Harold* to recover that touch of the marvellous :

> Yet, Freedom ! yet thy banner, torn, but flying,
> Streams like the thunder-storm *against* the wind ;
> Thy trumpet voice, though broken now and dying,
> The loudest still the tempest leaves behind ;
> Thy tree hath lost its blossoms, and the rind,
> Chopp'd by the axe, looks rough and little worth,
> But the sap lasts, and still the seed we find
> Sown deep, even in the bosom of the North ;
> So shall a better spring less bitter fruit bring forth.

The spirit of these lines tells us what Byron could do when his genius was working for him. Unluckily it deserted him sometimes when he felt most certain of himself. He suffered in his verse from two contrary influences. One was the romantic, which he shared with Coleridge and Shelley ; the other was the eighteenth century Augustan mode, with Pope as master.

Certain qualities in his make-up, his satiric wit, his rebellious yet impressionable mind, his dislike of anything like common virtue, drew him to look for models among writers who had a faculty which did not accord with his rapid rhyming. He was one of the most passionate of poets, and passion means sincerity of expression, yet he often used rhetoric after a fashion that to our present taste seems artificial. To Carlyle, another rhetorician, as satirical as you please, Byron seemed insincere. " Shut thy Byron ; open they Goethe," he said. Yet Goethe himself had no doubt of Byron's incomparable powers. Was it not he who said : " The English may make of Byron what they choose. But this is sure—they can show no poet to compare with him. He is unlike all the rest, and in the main greater."

Matthew Arnold said he was the greatest natural force that had come into our literature since Shakespeare. And Robert Louis Stevenson, an unconventional critic, once wrote, advising a friend to try Byron's *Mazeppa* ; " grand and no mistake," he said, " it has a fire and a passion ; and a rapid intuition of

genius, that makes one rather sorry for one's own generation of better writers and . . . smaller men."

If taken in that spirit of appreciation, this Byron Breviary achieves its end, the reader will not be content to stop at his lesser testament, but will wish to go on to the greater; and learn to measure, as the poet said of St. Peter's at Rome, that edifice which "fools our fond gaze"—

> Till, growing with its growth, we thus dilate
> Our spirits to the size of that they contemplate.

CONTENTS

LYRICS AND OTHER POEMS

SATIRICAL AND OCCASIONAL VERSE

LETTERS

LYRICAL AND OTHER POEMS

NOTHING SO DIFFICULT AS A BEGINNING

Nothing so difficult as a beginning
In poesy, unless perhaps the end ;
For oftentimes when Pegasus seems winning
The race, he sprains a wing, and down we tend,
Like Lucifer when hurl'd from heaven for sinning ;
Our sin the same, and hard as his to mend—
Being pride, which leads the mind to soar too far,
Till our own weakness shows us what we are.

But Time, which brings all beings to their level,
And sharp Adversity, will teach at last
Man,—and, as we would hope,—perhaps the Devil,
That neither of their intellects are vast :
While youth's hot wishes in our red veins revel,
We know not this—the blood flows on too fast ;
But as the torrent widens towards the ocean,
We ponder deeply on each past emotion.

As boy, I thought myself a clever fellow,
And wish'd that others held the same opinion ;
They took it up when my days grew more mellow,
And other minds acknowledged my dominion :
Now my sere fancy " falls into the yellow
Leaf," and Imagination droops her pinion,
And the sad truth which hovers o'er my desk
Turns what was once romantic to burlesque.

And if I laugh at any mortal thing,
'Tis that I may not weep ; and if I weep,
'Tis that our nature cannot always bring
Itself to apathy, for we must steep

Our hearts first in the depths of Lethe's spring,
Ere what we least wish to behold will sleep :
Thetis baptized her mortal son in Styx ;
A mortal mother would on Lethe fix.

Don Juan.

SO, WE'LL GO NO MORE A ROVING

So, we'll go no more a roving
So late into the night,
Though the heart be still as loving,
And the moon be still as bright.

For the sword outwears its sheath,
And the soul wears out the breast,
And the heart must pause to breathe,
And love itself have rest.

Though the night was made for loving,
And the day returns too soon,
Yet we'll go no more a roving
By the light of the moon.

SHE WALKS IN BEAUTY

She walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies ;
And all that's best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes :
Thus mellow'd to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

One shade the more, one ray the less,
Had half impair'd the nameless grace
Which waves in every raven tress,
Or softly lightens o'er her face ;
Where thoughts serenely sweet express
How pure, how dear their dwelling-place.

And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow,
But tell of days in goodness spent,
A mind at peace with all below,
A heart whose love is innocent !

THERE BE NONE OF BEAUTY'S DAUGHTERS

There be none of Beauty's daughters
With a magic like thee ;
And like music on the waters
Is thy sweet voice to me :
When, as if its sound were causing
The charmed ocean's pausing,
The waves lie still and gleaming,
And the lull'd winds seem dreaming.

And the midnight moon is weaving
Her bright chain o'er the deep ;
Whose breast is gently heaving,
As an infant's asleep :
So the spirit bows before thee,
To listen and adore thee ;
With a full but soft emotion,
Like the swell of Summer's ocean.

COULD LOVE FOR EVER

Could Love for ever
Run like a river,
And Time's endeavour
Be tried in vain—
No other pleasure
With this could measure ;
And like a treasure
We'd hug the chain.

But since our sighing
Ends not in dying,
And, form'd for flying,
Love plumes his wing ;
Then for this reason
Let's love a season ;
But let that season be only Spring.

When lovers parted
Feel broken-hearted,
And, all hopes thwarted,
Expect to die ;
A few years older,
Ah ! how much colder
They might behold her
For whom they sigh !
When link'd together,
In every weather,
They pluck Love's feather
From out his wing—
He'll stay for ever,
But sadly shiver
Without his plumage, when past the Spring.

Like Chiefs of Faction,
His life is action—
A formal paction
That curbs his reign,
Obscures his glory,
Despot no more, he
Such territory
Quits with disdain.
Still, still advancing,
With banners glancing,
His power enhancing,

He must move on—
Repose but cloys him,
Retreat destroys him,
Love brooks not a degraded throne.

Wait not, fond lover !
Till years are over,
And then recover,
As from a dream.
While each bewailing
The other's failing,
With wrath and railing,
All hideous seem—
While first decreasing,
Yet not quite ceasing,
Wait not till teasing
All passion blight :
If once diminish'd
Love's reign is finish'd—
Then part in friendship,—and bid good-night.

So shall Affection
To recollection
The dear connection
Bring back with joy :
You had not waited
Till, tired or hated,
Your passions sated
Began to cloy.
Your last embraces
Leave no cold traces—
The same fond faces
As through the past ;
And eyes, the mirrors
Of your sweet errors
Reflect but rapture—not least though last.

True, separations
Ask more than patience ;
What desperations
From such have risen !
But yet remaining,
What is't but chaining
Hearts which, once waning,
Beat 'gainst their prison ?
Time can but cloy love,
And use destroy love :
The winged boy, Love,
Is but for boys—
You'll find it torture
Though sharper, shorter,
To wean, and not wear out your joys.

OH, TALK NOT TO ME OF A NAME GREAT IN STORY

Oh, talk not to me of a name great in story ;
The days of our youth are the days of our glory ;
And the myrtle and ivy of sweet two-and-twenty
Are worth all your laurels, though ever so plenty.

What are garlands and crowns to the brow that is wrinkled ?
'Tis but as a dead-flower with May-dew besprinkled.
Then away with all such from the head that is hoary !
What care I for the wreaths that can *only* give glory ?

Oh Fame !—if I e'er took delight in thy praises,
'Twas less for the sake of thy high sounding phrases,
Than to see the bright eyes of the dear one discover
She thought that I was not unworthy to love her.

There chiefly I sought thee, *there* only I found thee ;
Her glance was the best of the rays that surround thee ;
When it sparkled o'er aught that was bright in my story,
I knew it was love, and I felt it was glory.

WHEN WE TWO PARTED

When we two parted
In silence and tears,
Half broken-hearted
To sever for years,
Pale grew thy cheek and cold,
Colder thy kiss ;
Truly that hour foretold
Sorrow to this.

The dew of the morning
Sunk chill on my brow—
It felt like the warning
Of what I feel now,
Thy vows are all broken,
And light is thy fame ;
I hear thy name spoken,
And share in its shame.

They name thee before me,
A knell to mine ear ;
A shudder comes o'er me—
Why wert thou so dear ?
They know not I knew thee,
Who knew thee too well :—
Long, long shall I rue thee,
Too deeply to tell.

In secret we met—
In silence I grieve,
That thy heart could forget,
Thy spirit deceive.
If I should meet thee
After long years,
How should I greet thee ?—
With silence and tears.

THERE WAS A TIME, I NEED NOT NAME

There was a time, I need not name,
Since it will ne'er forgotten be,
When all our feelings were the same
As still my soul hath been to thee.

And from that hour, when first thy tongue
Confess'd a love which equall'd mine,
Though many a grief my heart hath wrung,
Unknown and thus unfelt by thine,

None, none hath sunk so deep as this—
To think how all that love hath flown ;
Transient as every faithless kiss
But transient in thy breast alone.

And yet my heart some solace knew,
When late I heard thy lips declare,
In accents once imagined true,
Remembrance of the days that were.

Yes ! my adored, yet most unkind !
Though thou wilt never love again,
To me 'tis doubly sweet to find
Remembrance of that love remain.

Yes ! 'tis a glorious thought to me,
Nor longer shall my soul repine,
Whate'er thou art or e'er shalt be,
Thou hast been dearly, solely, mine.

BEAUTIFUL SHADOW OF THETIS'S BOY!

Beautiful shadow
  Of Thetis's boy!
Who sleeps in the meadow
  Whose grass grows o'er Troy:
From the red earth like Adam,
  Thy likeness I shape,
As the being who made him,
  Whose actions I ape,
Thou clay, be all glowing,
  Till the rose in his cheek,
Be as fair as, when blowing,
  It wears its first streak!
Ye violets, I scatter,
  Now turn into eyes!
And thou, sunshiny water,
  Of blood take the guise!
Let these hyacinth boughs
  Be his long flowing hair,
And wave o'er his brows,
  As thou wavest in air!
Let his heart be this marble
  I tear from the rock!
But his voice as the warble
  Of birds on yon oak!
Let his flesh be the purest
  Of mould, in which grew
The lily-root surest,
  And drank the best dew!
Let his limbs be the lightest
  Which clay can compound,
And his aspect the brightest
  On earth to be found!
Elements! near me,
  Be mingled and stirr'd,

Know me, and hear me,
And leap to my word!
Sunbeams, awaken
This earth's animation!
'Tis done! He hath taken
His stand in creation!

STANZAS FOR MUSIC[1]

" O Lachrymarum fons, tenero sacros
Ducentium ortus ex animo: quater
Felix! in imo qui scatentem
Pectore te, pia Nympha, sensit."

GRAY'S *Poemata.*

There's not a joy the world can give like that it takes away,
When the glow of early thought declines in feeling's dull decay;
'Tis not on youth's smooth cheek the blush alone, which fades so fast,
But the tender bloom of heart is gone, ere youth itself be past.

Then the few whose spirits float above the wreck of happiness
Are driven o'er the shoals of guilt or ocean of excess:
The magnet of their course is gone or only points in vain
The shore to which their shiver'd sail shall never stretch again.

Then the mortal coldness of the soul like death itself comes down;
It cannot feel for others' woes, it dare not dream its own;
That heavy chill has frozen o'er the fountain of our tears,
And though the eye may sparkle still, 'tis where the ice appears.

[1] " I feel merry enough to send you a sad song. An event, the death of poor Dorset, and the recollection of what I once felt, and ought to have felt now, but could not—set me pondering, and finally into the train of thought which you have in your hands. I wrote them with a view to your setting them, and if *you* did not think yourself degraded, for once in a way, by marrying them to music."—*Lord Byron to Tom Moore.*

Though wit may flash from fluent lips, and mirth distract the breast,
Through midnight hours that yield no more their former hope of rest ;
'Tis but as ivy-leaves around the ruin'd turret wreath.
All green and wildly fresh without, but worn and grey beneath.

Oh could I feel as I have felt,—or be what I have been,
Or weep as I could once have wept, o'er many a vanish'd scene ;
As springs in deserts found seem sweet, all brackish though they be,
So, midst the wither'd waste of life, those tears would flow to me.

March, 1815.

SHADOWS OF BEAUTY !

Shadows of beauty !
  Shadows of power !
Rise to your duty—
  This is the hour !
Walk lovely and pliant
  From the depth of this fountain
As the cloud-shapen giant
  Bestrides the Hartz Mountain.
Come as ye were,
  That our eyes may behold
The model in air
  Of the form I will mould,
Bright as the Iris
  When ether is spann'd ;—
Such *his* desire is,
  Such my command !
Demons heroic—
  Demons who were
The form of the stoic
  Or sophist of yore—

Or the shape of each victor,
From Macedon's boy
To each high Roman's picture,
Who breathed to destroy—
Shadows of beauty!
Shadows of power!
Up to your duty—
This is the hour!

WHEN THE MOON IS ON THE WAVE

When the moon is on the wave,
And the glow-worm in the grass,
And the meteor on the grave,
And the wisp on the morass:
When the falling stars are shooting,
And the answer'd owls are hooting,
And the silent leaves are still
In the shadow of the hill,
Shall my soul be upon thine,
With a power and with a sign.

Though thy slumber may be deep,
Yet thy spirit shall not sleep;
There are shades which will not vanish,
There are thoughts thou canst not banish;
By a power to thee unknown,
Thou canst never be alone;
Thou art wrapt as with a shroud,
Thou are gather'd in a cloud;
And for ever shalt thou dwell
In the spirit of this spell.

Though thou seest me not pass by,
Thou shalt feel me with thine eye
As a thing that, though unseen,
Must be near thee, and hath been;

And when in that secret dread
Thou hast turn'd around thy head,
Thou shalt marvel I am not
As thy shadow on the spot,
And the power which thou dost feel
Shall be what thou must conceal.

And a magic voice and verse
Hath baptized thee with a curse ;
And a spirit of the air
Hath begirt thee with a snare ;
In the wind there is a voice
Shall forbid thee to rejoice ;
And to thee shall Night deny
All the quiet of her sky ;
And the day shall have a sun,
Which shall make thee wish it done.

THE MONARCH

Mont Blanc is the monarch of mountains ;
They crown'd him long ago
On a throne of rocks, in a robe of clouds,
With a diadem of snow.
Around his waist are forests braced,
The avalanche in his hand ;
But ere it fall, that thundering ball
Must pause for my command.
The glacier's cold and restless mass
Moves onward day by day ;
But I am he who bids it pass,
Or with its ice delay.
I am the spirit of the place,
Could make the mountain bow
And quiver to his cavern'd base—
And what with me wouldst *thou* ?

THE RIDER OF THE WIND

I am a rider of the wind,
The stirrer of the storm ;
The hurricane I left behind
Is yet with lightning warm ;
To speed to thee, o'er shore and sea
I swept upon the blast :
The fleet I met sail'd well, and yet
'Twill sink ere night be past.

Manfred.

THE STAR WHICH RULES THY DESTINY

The star which rules thy destiny
Was ruled, ere earth began, by me :
It was a world as fresh and fair
As e'er revolved round sun in air ;
Its course was free and regular,
Space bosom'd not a lovelier star,
The hour arrived—and it became
A wandering mass of shapeless flame,
A pathless comet, and a curse,
The menace of the universe ;
Still rolling on with innate force,
Without a sphere, without a course,
A bright deformity on high,
The monster of the upper sky !
And thou ! beneath its influence born—
Thou worm ! whom I obey and scorn—
Forced by a power (which is not thine,
And lent thee but to make thee mine)
For this brief moment to descend,
Where these weak spirits round thee bend,
And parley with a thing like thee—
What wouldst thou, child of clay ! with me ?

Manfred.

AZAZIEL

Whatever star contain thy glory ;
  In the eternal depths of heaven
  Albeit thou watchest with " the seven,"
Though through space infinite and hoary
  Before thy bright wings worlds be driven,
    Yet hear !
Oh ! think of her who holds thee dear !
  And though she nothing is to thee,
Yet think that thou art all to her.
  Thou canst not tell,—and never be
  Such pangs decreed to aught save me,—
  The bitterness of tears.
  Eternity is in thine years,
Unborn, undying beauty in thine eyes ;
With me thou canst not sympathise,
  Except in love, and there thou must
  Acknowledge that more loving dust
Ne'er wept beneath the skies.
Thou walk'st thy many worlds, thou see'st
  The face of him who made thee great,
As he had made me of the least
  Of those cast out from Eden's gate :
    Yet, seraph dear !
      Oh hear !
For thou hast loved me, and I would not die
  Until I know what I must die in knowing,
That thou forgett'st in thine eternity
  Her whose heart death could not keep from o'erflowing
For thee, immortal essence as thou art !

Heaven and Earth :
A Mystery.

TO FLORENCE: THE NIGHT STORM[1]

On the Road to Zitza.

Chill and mirk is the nightly blast,
Where Pindus' mountains rise,
And angry clouds are pouring fast
The vengeance of the skies.

Our guides are gone, our hope is lost,
And lightnings, as they play,
But show where rocks our path have crost,
Or gild the torrent's spray.

Is yon a cot I saw, though low?
When lightning broke the gloom—
How welcome were its shade!—ah, no!
'Tis but a Turkish tomb.

Through sounds of foaming waterfalls,
I hear a voice exclaim—
My way-worn countryman, who calls
On distant England's name.

A shot is fired—by foe or friend?
Another—'tis to tell
The mountain-peasants to descend,
And lead us where they dwell.

Oh! who in such a night will dare
To tempt the wilderness?
And who 'mid thunder peals can hear
Our signal of distress?

[1] The thunderstorm occurred during the night of the 11th October, 1809, when Lord Byron's guides had lost the road to Zitza, near the range of mountains formerly called Pindus, in Albania.

And who that heard our shouts would rise
To try the dubious road ?
Nor rather deem from nightly cries
That outlaws were abroad.

Clouds burst, skies flash, oh, dreadful hour !
More fiercely pours the storm !
Yet here one thought has still the power
To keep my bosom warm.

While wand'ring through each broken path,
O'er brake and craggy brow ;
While elements exhaust their wrath,
Sweet Florence, where art thou ?

Not on the sea, not on the sea,
Thy bark hath long been gone :
Oh, may the storm that pours on me,
Bow down my head alone !

Full swiftly blew the swift Siroc,
When last I press'd thy lip ;
And long ere now, with foaming shock,
Impell'd thy gallant ship.

Now thou art safe ; nay, long ere now
Hast trod the shore of Spain ;
'Twere hard if aught so fair as thou
Should linger on the main.

And since I now remember thee
In darkness and in dread,
As in those hours of revelry
Which mirth and music sped ;

Do thou, amid the fair white walls,
If Cadiz yet be free,
At times from out her latticed halls
Look o'er the dark blue sea ;

Then think upon Calypso's isles,
Endear'd by days gone by ;
To others give a thousand smiles,
To me a single sigh.

And when the admiring circle mark
The paleness of thy face,
A half-form'd tear, a transient spark
Of melancholy grace,

Again thou'lt smile, and blushing shun
Some coxcomb's raillery ;
Nor own for once thou thought'st of one,
Who ever thinks on thee.

Though smile and sigh alike are vain,
When sever'd hearts repine,
My spirit flies o'er mount and main,
And mourns in search of thine.

THROUGH CLOUDLESS SKIES.

Written in passing the Ambracian Gulf.

Through cloudless skies, in silvery sheen,
Full beams the moon on Actium's coast ;
And on these waves, for Egypt's queen,
The ancient world was won and lost.

And now upon the scene I look,
The azure grave of many a Roman ;
Where stern Ambition once forsook
His wavering crown to follow woman.

Florence ! whom I will love as well
As ever yet was said or sung,
(Since Orpheus sang his spouse from hell)
Whilst thou art fair and I am young ;

Sweet Florence ! those were pleasant times,
When worlds were staked for ladies' eyes :
Had bards as many realms as rhymes,
Thy charms might raise new Antonies.

Though Fate forbids such things to be
Yet, by thine eyes and ringlets curl'd !
I cannot lose a world for thee,
But would not lose thee for a world.

DEAR OBJECT OF DEFEATED CARE !

Lines written beneath a Picture.

Dear object of defeated care !
Though now of Love and thee bereft,
To reconcile me with despair,
Thine image and my tears are left.

'Tis said with Sorrow Time can cope ;
But this I feel can ne'er be true :
For by the death-blow of my Hope
My Memory immortal grew.

ATHENS, *January*, 1811.

FARE THEE WELL!

"Alas! they had been friends in Youth;
But whispering tongues can poison truth;
And constancy lives in realms above;
And Life is thorny, and youth is vain;
And to be wroth with one we love,
Doth work like madness in the brain;
* * * * *
But never either found another
To free the hollow heart from paining—
They stood aloof, the scars remaining,
Like cliffs, which had been rent asunder;
A dreary sea now flows between,
But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder
Shall wholly do away, I ween,
The marks of that which once hath been."

COLERIDGE'S *Christabel.*

Fare thee well! and if for ever,
Still for ever, fare *thee well:*
Even though unforgiving, never
'Gainst thee shall my heart rebel.

Would that breast were bared before thee
Where thy head so oft hath lain
While that placid sleep came o'er thee
Which thou ne'er canst know again:

Would that breast, by thee glanced over,
Every inmost thought could show!
Then thou would'st at last discover
'Twas not well to spurn it so.

Though the world for this commend thee—
Though it smile upon the blow,
Even its praises must offend thee,
Founded on another's woe:

Though my many faults defaced me,
Could no other arm be found,
Than the one which once embraced me,
To inflict a cureless wound?

Yet, oh yet, thyself deceive not ;
Love may sink by slow decay,
But by sudden wrench, believe not
Hearts can thus be torn away :

Still thine own its life retaineth—
Still must mine, though bleeding, beat ;
And the undying thought which paineth
Is—that we no more may meet.

These are words of deeper sorrow
Than the wail above the dead ;
Both shall live, but every morrow
Wake us from a widow'd bed.

And when thou would solace gather,
When our child's first accents flow,
Wilt thou teach her to say " Father ! "
Though his care she must forego ?

When her little hands shall press thee,
When her lip to thine is press'd,
Think of him whose prayer shall bless thee,
Think of him thy love had bless'd !

Should her lineaments resemble
Those thou never more may'st see,
Then thy heart will softly tremble
With a pulse yet true to me.

All my faults perchance thou knowest,
All my madness none can know ;
All my hopes, where'er thou goest,
Wither, yet with *thee* they go.

Every feeling hath been shaken ;
Pride, which not a world could bow,
Bows to thee—by thee forsaken,
Even my soul forsakes me now :

But 'tis done—all words are idle
Words from me are vainer still ;
But the thoughts we cannot bridle
Force their way without the will,—

Fare thee well !—thus disunited,
Torn from every nearer tie,
Sear'd in heart, and lone, and blighted,
More than this I scarce can die.

March 17, 1816.

RIVER, THAT ROLLEST BY THE ANCIENT WALLS

To the River Po.

River, that rollest by the ancient walls,
Where dwells the lady of my love, when she
Walks by thy brink, and there perchance recalls
A faint and fleeting memory of me ;

What if thy deep and ample stream should be
A mirror of my heart, where she may read
The thousand thoughts I now betray to thee,
Wild as thy wave, and headlong as thy speed !

What do I say—a mirror of my heart ?
Are not thy waters sweeping, dark, and strong ?
Such as my feelings were and are, thou art ;
And such as thou art were my passions long.

Time may have somewhat tamed them,—not for ever ;
Thou overflow'st thy banks, and not for aye
The bosom overboils, congenial river !
Thy floods subside, and mine have sunk away.

But left long wrecks behind, and now again,
Born in our old unchanged career, we move ;
Thou tendest wildly onwards to the main,
And I—to loving *one* I should not love.

The current I behold will sweep beneath
Her native walls and murmur at her feet ;
Her eyes will look on thee, when she shall breathe
The twilight air, unharm'd by summer's heat.

She will look on thee,—I have look'd on thee,
Full of that thought ; and, from that moment, ne'er
Thy waters could I dream of, name, or see,
Without the inseparable sigh for her !

Her bright eyes will be imaged in thy stream,—
Yes ! they will meet the wave I gaze on now :
Mine cannot witness, even in a dream,
That happy wave repass me in its flow !

The wave that bear my tears returns no more :
Will she return by whom that wave shall sweep ?—
Both tread thy banks, both wander on thy shore,
I by thy source, she by the dark-blue deep.

But that which keepeth us apart is not
Distance, nor depth of wave, nor space of earth,
But the distraction of a various lot,
As various as the climates of our birth.

A stranger loves the lady of the land,
Born far beyond the mountains, but his blood
Is all meridian, as if never fann'd
By the black wind that chills the polar flood.

My blood is all meridian ; were it not,
I had not left my clime, nor should I be,
In spite of tortures, ne'er to be forgot,
A slave again of love,—at least of thee.

'Tis vain to struggle—let me perish young—
Live as I lived, and love as I have loved ;
To dust if I return, from dust I sprung,
And then, at least, my heart can ne'er be moved.

ROMAIC SONG

" Μπενω μες 'τσ' πέριβόλι
'Ωραιότατη Χάηδή'." [1]

I enter thy garden of roses,
Beloved and fair Haidée,
Each morning where Flora reposes,
For surely I see her in thee.
Oh, Lovely ! thus low I implore thee,
Receive this fond truth from my tongue,
Which utters its song to adore thee,
Yet trembles for what it has sung ;
As the branch, at the bidding of Nature,
Adds fragrance, and fruit to the tree,
Through her eyes, through her every feature,
Shines the soul of the young Haidée.

But the loveliest garden grows hateful
When Love has abandon'd the bowers ;
Bring me hemlock—since mine is ungrateful,
That herb is more fragrant than flowers.
The poison when pour'd from the chalice,
Will deeply embitter the bowl ;
But when drunk to escape from thy malice,
The draught shall be sweet to my soul.
Too cruel ! in vain I implore thee
My heart from these horrors to save :
Will nought to my bosom restore thee ?
Then open the gates of the grave.

[1] The song from which this is taken is a great favourite with the young girls of Athens of all classes. Their manner of singing it is by verses in rotation, the whole number present joining in the chorus. The air is plaintive and pretty.

As the chief who to combat advances
Secure of his conquest before,
Thus thou, with those eyes for thy lances,
Hast pierced through my heart to its core.
Ah, tell me, my soul ! must I perish
By pangs which a smile would dispel ?
Would the hope, which thou once bad'st me cherish,
For torture repay me too well ?
Now sad is the garden of roses,
Beloved but false Haidée !
There Flora all wither'd reposes,
And mourns o'er thine absence with me.

TAMBOURGI, TAMBOURGI !

Tambourgi ! Tambourgi ! thy 'larum afar
Gives hope to the valiant, and promise of war ;
All the sons of the mountains arise at the note,
Chimariot, Illyrian, and dark Suliote !

Oh ! who is more brave than a dark Suliote,
In his snowy camese and his shaggy capote ?
To the wolf and the vulture he leaves his wild flock,
And descends to the plain like the stream from the rock.

Shall the sons of Chimari, who never forgive
The fault of a friend, bid an enemy live ?
Let those guns so unerring such vengeance forego ?
What mark is so fair as the breast of a foe ?

Macedonia sends forth her invincible race ;
For a time they abandon the cave and the chase ;
But those scarfs of blood-red shall be redder, before
The sabre is sheathed and the battle is o'er.

Then the pirates of Parga that dwell by the waves,
And teach the pale Franks what it is to be slaves,
Shall leave on the beach the long galley and oar,
And track to his covert the captive on shore.

I ask not the pleasures that riches supply,
My sabre shall win what the feeble must buy ;
Shall win the young bride with her long flowing hair,
And many a maid from her mother shall tear.

I love the fair face of the maid in her youth,
Her caresses shall lull me, her music shall soothe ;
Let her bring from the chamber her many-toned lyre,
And sing us a song on the fall of her sire.

Remember the moment when Previsa fell,
The shrieks of the conquer'd, the conquerors' yell ;
The roofs that we fired, and the plunder we shared,
The wealthy we slaughter'd, the lovely we spared.

I talk not of mercy, I talk not of fear ;
He neither must know who would serve the Vizier :
Since the days of our prophet the Crescent ne'er saw
A chief ever-glorious like Ali Pashaw.

Dark Muchtar his son to the Danube is sped,
Let the yellow-hair'd Giaours view his horsetail with dread ;
When his Delhis come dashing in blood o'er the banks,
How few shall escape from the Muscovite ranks !

Selictar ! unsheathe then our chief's scimitar :
Tambourgi ! thy 'larum gives promise of war.
Ye mountains, that see us descend to the shore,
Shall view us as victors, or view us no more !

MAID OF ATHENS, ERE WE PART

Ζώη μοῦ, σάς ἀγαπῶ

Maid of Athens, ere we part,
Give, oh, give me back my heart!
Or, since that has left my breast,
Keep it now, and take the rest!
Hear my vow before I go,
Ζώη μοῦ, σάς ἀγαπῶ.[1]

By those tresses unconfined,
Woo'd by each Ægean wind;
By those lids whose jetty fringe
Kiss thy soft cheeks' blooming tinge;
By those wild eyes like the roe,
Ζώη μοῦ, σάς ἀγαπῶ.

By that lip I long to taste;
By that zone-encircled waist;
By all the token-flowers that tell
What words can never speak so well;
By love's alternate joy and woe.
Ζώη μοῦ, σάς ἀγαπῶ.

Maid of Athens! I am gone:
Think of me, sweet! when alone.
Though I fly to Istambol,
Athens holds my heart and soul:
Can I cease to love thee? No!
Ζώη μοῦ, σάς ἀγαπῶ.

ATHENS, 1810.

[1] Romaic expression of tenderness: If I translate it, I shall affront the gentlemen, as it may seem that I supposed they could not; and if I do not I may affront the ladies. For fear of any misconstruction on the part of the latter, I shall do so, begging pardon of the learned. It means, "My life, I love you!" which sounds very prettily in all languages, and is as much in fashion in Greece at this day as, Juvenal tells us, the two first words were amongst the Roman ladies, whose erotic expressions were all Hellenised.

TO TOM MOORE

My boat is on the shore,
And my bark is on the sea ;
But, before I go, Tom Moore,
Here's a double health to thee !

Here's a sigh to those who love me,
And a smile to those who hate ;
And, whatever sky's above me,
Here's a heart for every fate.

Though the ocean roar around me,
Yet it still shall bear me on ;
Though a desert should surround me,
It hath springs that may be won.

Were't the last drop in the well,
As I gasp'd upon the brink,
Ere my fainting spirit fell,
'Tis to thee that I would drink.

With that water, as this wine,
The libation I would pour
Should be—peace with thine and mine,
And a health to thee, Tom Moore.

MANY ARE POETS WITHOUT THE NAME

Many are poets who have never penn'd
Their inspiration, and perchance the best :
They felt, and loved, and died, but would not lend
Their thoughts to meaner beings ; they compress'd
The god within them, and rejoin'd the stars
Unlaurell'd upon earth, but far more bless'd

Than those who are degraded by the jars
Of passion, and their frailties link'd to fame,
Conquerors of high renown, but full of scars.
Many are poets but without the name,
For what is poesy but to create
From overfeeling good or ill ; and aim
At an eternal life beyond our fate,
And be the new Prometheus of new men,
Bestowing fire from heaven, and then, too late,
Finding the pleasure given repaid with pain,
And vultures to the heart of the bestower,
Who, having lavish'd his high gift in vain,
Lies chain'd to his lone rock by the sea-shore ?
So be it : we can bear.—But thus all they
Whose intellect is an o'ermastering power
Which still recoils from its encumbering clay
Or lightens it to spirit, whatsoe'er
The form which their creations may essay,
Are bards ; the kindled marble's bust may wear
More poesy upon its speaking brow
Than aught less than the Homeric page may bear ;
One noble stroke with a whole life may glow,
Or deify the canvas till it shine
With beauty so surpassing all below,
That they who kneel to idols so divine
Break no commandment, for high heaven is there
Transfused, transfigurated : and the line
Of poesy, which peoples but the air
With thought and beings of our thought reflected,
Can do no more : then let the artist share
The palm, he shares the peril, and dejected
Faints o'er the labour unapproved—Alas !
Despair and Genius are too oft connected.
Within the ages which before me pass
Art shall resume and equal even the sway
Which with Apelles and old Phidias
She held in Hellas' unforgotten day.

Prophecy of Dante.

ETERNAL SPIRIT OF THE CHAINLESS MIND!

SONNET ON CHILLON

Eternal Spirit of the chainless Mind!
Brightest in dungeons, Liberty! thou art,
For there thy habitation is the heart—
The heart which love of thee alone can bind;
And when thy sons to fetters are consign'd—
To fetters, and the damp vault's dayless gloom,
Their country conquers with their martyrdom,
And Freedom's fame finds wings on every wind.
Chillon! thy prison is a holy place,
And thy sad floor an altar—for 'twas trod,
Until his very steps have left a trace
Worn, as if thy cold pavement were a sod,
By Bonnivard!—May none those marks efface!
For they appeal from tyranny to God.

NEWSTEAD ABBEY

It stood embosom'd in a happy valley,
Crown'd by high woodlands, where the Druid oak
Stood like Caractacus in act to rally
His host, with broad arms 'gainst the thunder stroke;
And from beneath his boughs were seen to sally
The dappled foresters—as day awoke,
The branching stag swept down with all his herd,
To quaff a brook which murmur'd like a bird.

Before the mansion lay a lucid lake,
Broad as transparent, deep, and freshly fed
By a river, which its soften'd way did take
In currents through the calmer water spread
Around: the wild-fowl nestled in the brake
And sedges, brooding in their liquid bed;
The woods sloped downwards to its brink, and stood
With their green faces fix'd upon the flood.

Its outlet dash'd into a deep cascade,
  Sparkling with foam, until again subsiding,
Its shriller echoes—like an infant made
  Quiet—sank into softer ripples, gliding
Into a rivulet ; and, thus allay'd,
  Pursued its course, now gleaming, and now hiding
Its windings through the woods ; now clear, now blue,
According as the skies their shadows threw.

A glorious remnant of the Gothic pile
  (While yet the church was Rome's) stood half apart
In a grand arch, which once screen'd many an aisle.
  These last had disappear'd—a loss to art :
The first yet frown'd superbly o'er the soil,
  And kindled feelings in the roughest heart,
Which mourn'd the power of time's or tempest's march,
In gazing on that venerable arch.

Within a niche, nigh to its pinnacle,
  Twelve saints had once stood sanctified in stone ;
But these had fallen, not when the friars fell,
  But in the war which struck Charles from his throne,
When each house was a fortalice—as tell
  The annals of full many a line undone,—
The gallant cavaliers, who fought in vain
For those who knew not to resign or reign.

But in a higher niche, alone, but crown'd,
  The virgin Mother of the God-born Child,
With her son in her bless'd arms, look'd round,
  Spared by some chance when all beside was spoil'd ;
She made the earth below seem holy ground.
  This may be superstition, weak or wild,
But even the faintest relics of a shrine
Of any worship wake some thoughts divine.

A mighty window, hollow in the centre,
Shorn of its glass of thousand colourings,
Through which the deepen'd glories once could enter,
Streaming from off the sun like seraphs' wings
Now yawns all desolate : now loud, now fainter,
The gale sweeps through its fretwork, and oft sings
The owl his anthem, where the silenced quire
Lie with their hallelujahs quench'd like fire.

But in the noontide of the moon, and when
The wind is winged from one point of heaven,
There moans a strange unearthly sound, which then
Is musical—a dying accent driven
Through the huge arch, which soars and sinks again.
Some deem it but the distant echo given
Back to the night-wind by the waterfall,
And harmonised by the old choral wall :

Others, that some original shape, or form
Shaped by decay perchance, hath given the power
(Though less than that of Memnon's statue, warm
In Egypt's rays, to harp at a fix'd hour)
To this grey ruin, with a voice to charm.
Sad, but serene, it sweeps o'er tree or tower ;
The cause I know not, nor can solve ; but such
The fact :—I've heard it,—once perhaps too much.

Amidst the court a Gothic fountain play'd,
Symmetrical, but deck'd with carvings quaint—
Strange faces, like to men in masquerade,
And here perhaps a monster, there a saint :
The spring gush'd through grim mouths of granite made,
And sparkled into basins, where it spent
Its little torrent in a thousand bubbles,
Like man's vain-glory, and his vainer troubles.

The mansion's self was vast and venerable,
With more of the monastic than has been
Elsewhere preserved : the cloisters still were stable,
The cells, too, and refectory, I ween :
An exquisite small chapel had been able,
Still unimpair'd to decorate the scene ;
The rest had been reform'd, replaced, or sunk,
And spoke more of the baron than the monk.

Huge halls, long galleries, spacious chambers, join'd
By no quite lawful marriage of the arts,
Might shock a connoisseur ; but when combined,
Form'd a whole which, irregular in parts,
Yet left a grand impression on the mind,
At least of those whose eyes are in their hearts.
We gaze upon a giant for his stature,
Nor judge at first if all be true to nature.

Steel barons, molten the next generation
To silken rows of gay and garter'd earls,
Glanced from the walls in goodly preservation :
And Lady Marys blooming into girls,
With fair long locks, had also kept their station :
And countesses mature, in robes and pearls :
Also some beauties of Sir Peter Lely,
Whose drapery hints we may admire them freely.

Judges in very formidable ermine
Were there, with brows that did not much invite
The accused to think their lordships would determine
His cause by leaning much from might to right :
Bishops, who had not left a single sermon :
Attorneys-general, awful to the sight,
As hinting more (unless our judgments warp us)
Of the " Star Chamber " than of " Habeas Corpus."

General, some all in armour, of the old
And iron time, ere lead had ta'en the lead ;
Others in wigs of Marlborough's martial fold,
Huger than twelve of our degenerate breed :
Lordlings, with staves of white or keys of gold :
Nimrods, whose canvass scarce contain'd the steed ;
And here and there some stern high patriot stood,
Who could not get the place for which he sued.

But ever and anon, to soothe your vision,
Fatigued with these hereditary glories,
There rose a Carlo Dolce or a Titian,
Or wilder group of savage Salvatore's ;
Here danced Albano's boys, and here the sea shone
In Vernet's ocean lights ; and there the stories
Of martyrs awed, as Spagnoletto tainted
His brush with all the blood of all the sainted.

Here sweetly spread a landscape of Lorraine ;
There Rembrandt made his darkness equal light,
Or gloomy Caravaggio's gloomier stain
Bronzed o'er some lean and stoic anchorite :—
But, lo ! a Teniers woos, and not in vain,
Your eyes to revel in a livelier sight :
His bell-mouth'd goblet makes me feel quite Danish
Or Dutch with thirst—What, ho ! a flask of Rhenish.

Don Juan.

THE BLACK FRIAR

Beware ! beware ! of the Black Friar,
Who sitteth by Norman stone,
For he mutters his prayer in the midnight air,
And his mass of the days that are gone.
When the Lord of the Hill, Amundeville,
Made Norman Church his prey,
And expell'd the friars, one friar still
Would not be driven away.

Though he came in his might, with King Henry's right,
To turn church lands to lay,
With sword in hand, and torch to light
Their walls, if they said nay ;
A monk remain'd, unchased, unchain'd,
And he did not seem form'd of clay,
For he's seen in the porch, and he's seen in the church,
Though he is not seen by day.

And whether for good, or whether for ill,
It is not mine to say ;
But still with the house of Amundeville
He abideth night and day.
By the marriage-bed of their lords, 'tis said,
He flits on the bridal eve ;
And 'tis held as faith, to their bed of death
He comes—but not to grieve.

When an heir is born, he's heard to mourn,
And when aught is to befall
That ancient line, in the pale moonshine
He walks from hall to hall
His form you may trace, but not his face,
'Tis shadow'd by his cowl ;
But his eyes may be seen from the folds between,
And they seem of a parted soul.

But beware ! beware ! of the Black Friar,
He still retains his sway,
For he is yet the church's heir,
Whoever may be the lay,
Amundeville is lord by day.
But the monk is lord by night ;
Nor wine nor wassail could raise a vassal
To question that friar's right.

Say nought to him as he walks the hall,
And he'll say nought to you ;
He sweeps along in his dusky pall,
As o'er the grass the dew.
Then grammercy ! for the Black Friar ;
Heaven sain him ! fair or foul,
And whatsoe'er may be his prayer,
Let ours be for his soul.

CELTIC MEMORIES

He who first met the Highlands' swelling blue
Will love each peak that shows a kindred hue,
Hail in each crag a friend's familiar face,
And clasp the mountain in his mind's embrace.
Long have I roam'd through lands which are not mine,
Adored the Alp, and loved the Apennine,
Revered Parnassus, and beheld the steep
Jove's Ida and Olympus crown the deep :
But 'twas not all long ages' lore, nor all
Their nature held me in their thrilling thrall ;
The infant rapture still survived the boy,
And Loch-na-garr with Ida look'd o'er Troy,
Mix'd Celtic memories with the Phyrgian mount,
And Highland linns with Castalie's clear fount.
Forgive me, Homer's universal shade !
Forgive me, Phœbus ! that my fancy stray'd ;
The north and nature taught me to adore
Your scenes sublime, from those beloved before.

WHEN I ROVED A YOUNG HIGHLANDER

When I roved a young Highlander o'er the dark heath,
And climb'd thy steep summit, oh Morven of snow !
To gaze on the torrent that thunder'd beneath,
Or the mist of the tempest that gather'd below,

Untutor'd by science, a stranger to fear,
And rude as the rocks where my infancy grew,
No feeling, save one, to my bosom was dear ;
Need I say, my sweet Mary, 'twas centred in you ?

Yet it could not be love, for I knew not the name—
What passion can dwell in the heart of a child ?
But still I perceive an emotion the same
As I felt, when a boy, on the crag-cover'd wild :
One image, alone on my bosom impress'd,
I loved my bleak regions, nor panted for new ;
And few were my wants, for my wishes were bless'd ;
And pure were my thoughts, for my soul was with you.

I arose with the dawn ; with my dog as my guide,
From mountain to mountain I bounded along ;
I breasted the billows of Dee's rushing tide,
And heard at a distance the Highlander's song ;
At eve, on my heath-cover'd couch of repose,
No dreams, save of Mary, were spread to my view ;
And warm to the skies my devotions arose,
For the first of my prayers was a blessing on you.

I left my bleak home, and my visions are gone ;
The mountains are vanished, my youth is no more ;
As the last of my race, I must wither alone,
And delight but in days I have witness'd before ;
Ah ! splendour has raised, but embitter'd my lot ;
More dear were the scenes which my infancy knew ;
Though my hopes may have fail'd, yet they are not forgot ;
Though cold is my heart, still it lingers with you.

When I see some dark hill point its crest to the sky,
I think of the rocks, that o'er-shadow Colbleen ;
When I see the soft blue of a love-speaking eye,
I think of those eyes that endear'd the rude scene ;

When, haply, some light-waving locks I behold,
That faintly resemble my Mary's in hue,
I think on the long flowing ringlets of gold,
The locks that were sacred to beauty, and you.

Yet the day may arrive when the mountains once more
Shall rise to my sight in their mantles of snow :
But while these soar above me, unchanged as before,
Will Mary be there to receive me ?—ah, no !
Adieu, then, ye hills, where my childhood was bred !
Thou sweet flowing Dee, to thy waters adieu !
No home in the forest shall shelter my head,—
Ah ! Mary, what home could be mine but with you ?

BRIGHT BE THE PLACE OF THY SOUL !

Bright be the place of thy soul !
No lovelier spirit than thine
E'er burst from its mortal control,
In the orbs of the blessed to shine.
On earth thou wert all but divine,
As thy soul shall immortally be ;
And our sorrow may cease to repine
When we know that thy God is with thee.

Light be the turf of thy tomb !
May its verdure like emeralds be !
There should not be the shadow of gloom,
In aught that reminds us of thee.
Young flowers and an evergreen tree
May spring from the spot of thy rest ;
But nor cypress nor yew let us see ;
For why should we mourn for the blest ?

TO FLORENCE

I.—WRITTEN AT MALTA

Oh Lady ! when I left the shore,
The distant shore which gave me birth,
I hardly thought to grieve once more,
To quit another spot on earth :

Yet here, amidst this barren isle,
Where panting nature droops the head,
Where only thou art seen to smile,
I view my parting hour with dread.

Though far from Albin's craggy shore
Divided by the dark-blue main ;
A few, brief, rolling seasons o'er,
Perchance I view her cliffs again :

But wheresoe'er I now may roam,
Through scorching clime, and varied sea,
Though Time restore me to my home,
I ne'er shall bend mine eyes on thee ;

On thee, in whom at once conspire
All charms which heedless hearts can move,
Whom but to see is to admire,
And, oh ! forgive the word—to love.

Forgive the word, in one who ne'er
With such a word can more offend ;
And since thy heart I cannot share,
Believe me, what I am, thy friend.

And who so cold as look on thee,
Thou lovely wand'rer, and be less ?
Nor be, what man should ever be,
The friend of Beauty in distress ?

Ah ! who would think that form had past
Through Danger's most destructive path,
Had braved the death-wing'd tempest's blast,
And 'scaped a tyrant's fiercer wrath ?

Lady ! when I shall view the walls
Where free Byzantium once arose
And Stamboul's Oriental halls
The Turkish tyrants now enclose ;

Though mightiest in the lists of fame,
That glorious city still shall be ;
On me 'twill hold a dearer claim,
As spot of thy nativity :

And though I bid thee now farewell,
When I behold that wond'rous scene,
Since where thou art I may not dwell,
'Twill soothe to be, where thou hast been.

II.—WRITTEN AT ATHENS, JANUARY 16, 1810

The spell is broke, the charm is flown !
Thus is it with life's fitful fever :
We madly smile when we should groan ;
Delirium is our best deceiver.

Each lucid interval of thought
Recalls the woes of nature's charter,
And he that acts as wise men ought,
But lives, as saints have died, a martyr.

INSCRIPTION ON THE MONUMENT OF A NEWFOUNDLAND DOG [1]

When some proud son of man returns to earth,
Unknown to glory, but upheld by birth,
The sculptor's art exhausts the pomp of woe,
And storied urns record who rests below ;
When all is done, upon the tomb is seen,
Not what he was, but what he should have been :
But the poor dog, in life the firmest friend,
The first to welcome, foremost to defend,
Whose honest heart is still his master's own,
Who labours, fights, lives, breathes for him alone,
Unhonour'd falls, unnoticed all his worth,
Denied in heaven the soul he held on earth :
While man, vain insect ! hopes to be forgiven,
And claims himself a sole exclusive heaven.
Oh man ! thou feeble tenant of an hour,
Debased by slavery, or corrupt by power,

[1] The monument was placed in the garden of Newstead. The following is the inscription by which the verses are preceded :

" Near this spot
Are deposited the Remains of one
Who possessed Beauty without Vanity,
Strength without Insolence,
Courage without Ferocity,
And all the Virtues of Man without his Vices.
This Praise, which would be unmeaning Flattery
If inscribed over human ashes,
Is but a just tribute to the Memory of BOATSWAIN, a Dog,
Who was born at Newfoundland, May, 1803,
And died at Newstead Abbey, Nov. 18, 1808."

Lord Byron thus announced the death of his favourite to Mr. Hodgson : " Boatswain is dead !—he expired in a state of madness, on the 18th, after suffering much, yet retaining all the gentleness of his nature to the last, never attempting to do the least injury to any one near him. I have now lost every thing except old Murray." By the will executed in 1811, Byron directed that his own body should be buried in a vault in the garden near his faithful dog.

Who knows thee well must quit thee with disgust,
Degraded mass of animated dust!
Thy love is lust, thy friendship all a cheat,
Thy smiles hypocrisy, thy words deceit!
By nature vile, ennobled but by name,
Each kindred brute might bid thee blush for shame.
Ye! who perchance behold this simple urn,
Pass on—it honours none you wish to mourn:
To mark a friend's remains these stones arise;
I never knew but one,—and here he lies.

NEWSTEAD ABBEY, *November* 30, 1808.

CHURCHILL'S GRAVE

A FACT LITERALLY RENDERED

I stood beside the grave of him who blazed
  The comet of a season, and I saw
The humblest of all sepulchres, and gazed
  With not the less of sorrow and of awe
On that neglected turf and quiet stone,
With name no clearer than the names unknown,
Which lay unread around it; and I ask'd
  The Gardener of that ground, why it might be
That for this plant strangers his memory task'd
  Through the thick deaths of half a century.

And thus he answer'd—"Well, I do not know
Why frequent travellers turn to pilgrims so;
He died before my day of Sextonship,
  And I had not the digging of this grave."
And is this all? I thought,—and do we rip
  The veil of Immortality? and crave
I know not what of honour and of light
Through unborn ages, to endure this blight?
So soon, and so successless? As I said,
The Architect of all on which we tread,

For Earth is but a tombstone, did essay
To extricate remembrance from the clay,
Whose minglings might confuse a Newton's thought,
Were it not that all life must end in one,
Of which we are but dreamers ;—as he caught
As 'twere the twilight of a former Sun,
Thus spoke he,—" I believe the man of whom
You wot, who lies in this selected tomb,
Was a most famous writer in his day,
And therefore travellers step from out their way
To pay him honour,—and myself whate'er
Your honour pleases,"—then most pleased I shook
From out my pocket's avaricious nook
Some certain coins of silver, which as 'twere
Perforce I gave this man, though I could spare
So much but inconveniently :—Ye smile,
I see ye, ye profane ones ! all the while,
Because my homely phrase the truth would tell.
You are the fools, not I—for I did dwell
With a deep thought, and with a soften'd eye,
On that Old Sexton's natural homily,
In which there was Obscurity and Fame,—
The Glory and the Nothing of a Name.

DIODATI, 1816.

COULD I REMOUNT THE RIVER OF MY YEARS

A FRAGMENT

Could I remount the river of my years
To the first fountain of our smiles and tears,
I would not trace again the stream of hours
Between their outworn banks of wither'd flowers,
But bid it flow as now—until it glides
Into the number of the nameless tides.

* * * * *

What is this Death ?—a quiet of the heart ?
The whole of that of which we are a part ?
For life is but a vision—what I see
Of all which lives alone is life to me,
And being so—the absent are the dead,
Who haunt us from tranquillity, and spread
A dreary shroud around us, and invest
With sad remembrancers our hours of rest.

The absent are the dead—for they are cold,
And ne'er can be what once we did behold ;
And they are changed, and cheerless,—or if yet
The unforgotten do not all forget,
Since thus divided—equal must it be
If the deep barrier be of earth, or sea ;
It may be both—but one day end it must
In the dark union of insensate dust.

The under-earth inhabitants—are they
But mingled millions decomposed to clay ?
The ashes of a thousand ages spread
Wherever man has trodden or shall tread ?
Or do they in their silent cities dwell
Each in his incommunicative cell ?
Or have they their own language ? and a sense
Of breathless being ?—darken'd and intense
As midnight in her solitude ?—Oh Earth !
Where are the past ?—and wherefore had they birth ?
The dead are thy inheritors—and we
But bubbles on thy surface ; and the key
Of thy profundity is in the grave,
The ebon portal of thy peopled cave,
Where I would walk in spirit, and behold
Our elements resolved to things untold,
And fathom hidden wonders, and explore
The essence of great bosoms now no more.

* * * * *

DIODATI, *July* 1816.

LAKE LEMAN

Rousseau—Voltaire—our Gibbon—and De Staël—
Leman ! these names are worthy of thy shore,
Thy shore of names like these ! wert thou no more,
Their memory thy remembrance would recall :
To them thy banks were lovely as to all,
But they have made them lovelier, for the lore
Of mighty minds doth hallow in the core
Of human hearts the ruin of a wall
Where dwelt the wise and wondrous ; but by *thee*
How much more, Lake of Beauty ! do we feel,
In sweetly gliding o'er thy crystal sea,
The wild glow of that not ungentle zeal,
Which of the heirs of immortality
Is proud, and makes the breath of glory real !

DIODATI, *July* 1816.

CLEAR, PLACID LEMAN

Clear, placid Leman ! thy contrasted lake,
With the wild world I dwelt in, is a thing
Which warns me, with its stillness, to forsake
Earth's troubled waters for a purer spring.
This quiet sail is as a noiseless wing
To waft me from distraction ; once I loved
Torn ocean's roar, but thy soft murmuring
Sounds sweet as if a sister's voice reproved,
That I with stern delights should e'er have been so moved.

It is the hush of night, and all between
Thy margin and the mountains, dusk, yet clear,
Mellow'd and mingling, yet distinctly seen,
Save darken'd Jura, whose capt heights appear
Precipitously steep ; and drawing near,

There breathes a living fragrance from the shore,
Of flowers yet fresh with childhood ; on the ear
Drops the light drip of the suspended oar,
Or chirps the grasshopper one good-night carol more :

He is an evening reveller, who makes
His life an infancy, and sings his fill ;
At intervals, some bird from out the brakes
Starts into voice a moment, then is still.
There seems a floating whisper on the hill,
But that is fancy, for the starlight dews
All silently their tears of love instil
Weeping themselves away, till they infuse
Deep into Nature's breast the spirit of her hues.

Ye stars ! which are the poetry of heaven !
If in your bright leaves we would read the fate
Of men and empires,—'tis to be forgiven,
That, in our aspirations to be great,
Our destinies o'erleap their mortal state,
And claim a kindred with you ; for ye are
A beauty and a mystery, and create
In us such love and reverence from afar,
That fortune, fame, power, life, have named themselves a star.

All heaven and earth are still—though not in sleep,
But breathless, as we grow when feeling most ;
And silent, as we stand in thoughts too deep :—
All heaven and earth are still : from the high host
Of stars, to the lull'd lake and mountain-coast,
All is concenter'd in a life intense,
Where not a beam, nor air, nor leaf is lost,
But hath a part of being, and a sense
Of that which is of all Creator and defence.

Then stirs the feeling infinite, so felt
In solitude, where we are *least* alone ;
A truth, which through our being then doth melt
And purifies from self : it is a tone,
The soul and source of music, which makes known
Eternal harmony, and sheds a charm,
Like to the fabled Cytherea's zone,
Binding all things with beauty ;—'t would disarm
The spectre Death, had he substantial power to harm.

* * * * * *

The sky is changed !—and such a change ! Oh night,
And storm, and darkness, ye are wondrous strong,
Yet lovely in your strength, as is the light
Of a dark eye in woman ! Far along,
From peak to peak, the rattling crags among
Leaps the live thunder ! Not from one lone cloud
But every mountain now hath found a tongue,
And Jura answers, through her misty shroud,
Back to the joyous Alps, who call to her aloud !

And this is in the night :—Most glorious night !
Thou wert not sent for slumber ! let me be
A sharer in thy fierce and fair delight,—
A portion of the tempest and of thee !
How the lit lake shines, a phosphoric sea,
And the big rain comes dancing to the earth !
And now again 'tis black,—and now, the glee
Of the loud hills shakes with its mountain-mirth,
As if they did rejoice o'er a young earthquake's birth.

Childe Harold.

DRACHENFELS[1]

The castled crag of Drachenfels
Frowns o'er the wide and winding Rhine,
Whose breast of waters broadly swells
Between the banks which bear the vine,
And hills all rich with blossom'd trees,
And fields which promise corn and wine,
And scatter'd cities crowning these,
Whose far white walls along them shine,
Have strew'd a scene, which I should see
With double joy wert *thou* with me.

And peasant girls, with deep blue eyes,
And hands which offer early flowers,
Walk smiling o'er this paradise ;
Above, the frequent feudal towers
Through green leaves lift their walls of gray,
And many a rock which steeply lowers,
And noble arch in proud decay,
Look o'er this vale of vintage-bowers ;
But one thing want these banks of Rhine—,
Thy gentle hand to clasp in mine !

I send the lilies given to me ;
Though long before thy hand they touch,
I know that they must wither'd be,
But yet reject them not as such ;
For I have cherish'd them as dear,
Because they yet may meet thine eye,

[1] The castle of Drachenfels stands on the highest summit of "the Seven Mountains," over the Rhine banks ; it is in ruins, and connected with some singular traditions ; it is the first in view on the road from Bonn, but on the opposite side of the river ; on this bank, nearly facing it, are the remains of another, called the Jew's Castle, and a large cross commemorative of the murder of a chief by his brother.

And guide thy soul to mine even here,
When thou behold'st them drooping nigh,
And know'st them gather'd by the Rhine,
And offer'd from my heart to thine !

The river nobly foams and flows,
The charm of this enchanted ground,
And all its thousand turns disclose
Some fresher beauty varying round ;
The haughtiest breast its wish might bound
Through life to dwell delighted here ;
Nor could on earth a spot be found
To nature and to me so dear,
Could thy dear eyes in following mine
Still sweeten more these banks of Rhine !

IN THE YEAR SINCE JESUS DIED FOR MEN

In the year since Jesus died for men,
Eighteen hundred years and ten,
We were a gallant company,
Riding o'er land, and sailing o'er sea.
Oh ! but we went merrily !
We forded the river, and clomb the high hill,
Never our steeds for a day stood still ;
Whether we lay in the cave or the shed,
Our sleep fell soft on the hardest bed ;
Whether we couch'd in our rough capote,
On the rougher plank of our gliding boat,
Or stretch'd on the beach, or our saddles spread
As a pillow beneath the resting head,
Fresh we woke upon the morrow :
  All our thoughts and words had scope,
  We had health, and we had hope,
Toil and travel, but no sorrow,

We were of all tongues and creeds ;—
Some were those who counted beads,
  Some of mosque, and some of church,
  And some, or I mis-say, of neither ;
Yet through the wide world might ye search,
  Nor find a motlier crew nor blither.

But some are dead, and some are gone,
And some are scatter'd and alone,
And some are rebels on the hills
That look along Epirus' valleys,
Where freedom still at moments rallies,
And pays in blood oppression's ills ;
  And some are in a far countree,
And some all restlessly at home ;
  But never more, oh ! never, we
Shall meet to revel and to roam.

But those hardy days flew cheerily,
And when they now fall drearily,
My thoughts, like swallows, skim the main,
And bear my spirit back again
Over the earth, and through the air,
A wild bird and a wanderer.

Siege of Corinth.

TIME

There is a temple in ruin stands,
Fashion'd by long forgotten hands ;
Two or three columns, and many a stone,
Marble and granite, with grass o'ergrown !

Out upon Time ! it will leave no more
Of the things to come than the things before !
Out upon Time ! who for ever will leave
But enough of the past for the future to grieve

O'er that which hath been, and o'er that which must be :
What we have seen, our sons shall see ;
Remnants of things that have pass'd away,
Fragments of stone, rear'd by creatures of clay !

TO IANTHE

Not in those climes where I have late been straying,
Though Beauty long hath there been matchless deem'd ;
Not in those visions to the heart displaying
Forms which it sighs but to have only dream'd,
Hath aught like thee in truth or fancy seem'd :
Nor, having seen thee, shall I vainly seek
To paint those charms which varied as they beam'd—
To such as see thee not my words were weak ;
To those who gaze on thee what language could they speak ?

Ah ! may'st thou ever be what now thou art,
Nor unbeseem the promise of thy spring,
As fair in form, as warm yet pure in heart,
Love's image upon earth without his wing,
And guileless beyond Hope's imagining !
And surely she who now so fondly rears
Thy youth, in thee, thus hourly brightening,
Beholds the rainbow of her future years,
Before whose heavenly hues all sorrow disappears.

Young Peri of the West !—'tis well for me
My years already doubly number thine ;
My loveless eye unmoved may gaze on thee,
And safely view thy ripening beauties shine ;
Happy, I ne'er shall see them in decline ;
Happier, that while all younger hearts shall bleed,
Mine shall escape the doom thine eyes assign
To those whose admiration shall succeed,
But mix'd with pangs to Love's even loveliest hours decreed.

Oh ! let that eye, which, wild as the gazelle's,
Now brightly bold or beautifully shy,
Wins as it wanders, dazzles where it dwells,
Glance o'er this page, nor to my verse deny
That smile for which my breast might vainly sigh,
Could I to thee be ever more than friend :
This much, dear maid ! accord ; nor question why
To one so young my strain I would commend,
But bid me with my wreath one matchless lily blend.

Such is thy name with this my verse entwined ;
And long as kinder eyes a look shall cast
On Harold's page, Ianthe's here enshrined
Shall thus be first beheld, forgotten last :
My days once number'd, should this homage past
Attract thy fairy fingers near the lyre
Of him who hail'd thee, loveliest as thou wast,
Such as the most my memory may desire ;
Though more than Hope can claim, could Friendship less require ?

CHILDE HAROLD'S FAREWELL

Oh ! that the desert were my dwelling-place,
With one fair spirit for my minister,
That I might all forget the human race,
And, hating no one, love but only her !
Ye elements !—in whose ennobling stir
I feel myself exalted—Can ye not
Accord me such a being ? Do I err
In deeming such inhabit many a spot ?
Though with them to converse can rarely be our lot.

There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
There is a rapture on the lonely shore,
There is society, where none intrudes,
By the deep sea, and music in its roar :
I love not Man the less, but Nature more,

From these our interviews, in which I steal
From all I may be, or have been before,
To mingle with the universe, and feel
What I can ne'er express, yet can not all conceal.

Roll on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean—roll !
Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain ;
Man marks the earth with ruin—his control
Stops with the shore ;—upon the watery plain
The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain
A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,
When, for a moment, like a drop of rain
He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan
Without a grave, unknell'd, uncoffin'd, and unknown.

His steps are not upon thy paths,—thy fields
Are not a spoil for him,—thou dost raise
And shake him from thee ; the vile strength he wields
For earth's destruction thou dost all despise
Spurning him from thy bosom to the skies,
And send'st him, shivering in thy playful spray
And howling, to his gods, where haply lies
His petty hope in some near port or bay,
And dashest him again to earth :—there let him lay.

The armaments which thunderstrike the walls
Of rock-built cities, bidding nations quake,
And monarchs tremble in their capitals,
The oak leviathans, whose huge ribs make
Their clay creator the vain title take
Of lord of thee, and arbiter of war ;
These are thy toys, and, as the snowy flake,
They melt into thy yeast of waves, which mar
Alike the Armada's pride, or spoils of Trafalgar.

Thy shores are empires, changed in all save thee—
Assyria, Greece, Rome, Carthage, what are they ?
Thy waters wasted them while they were free,
And many a tyrant since ; their shores obey
The stranger, slave, or savage ; their decay
Has dried up realms to deserts :—not so thou,
Unchangeable save to thy wild waves' play—
Time writes no wrinkle on thine azure brow—
Such as creation's dawn beheld, thou rollest now.

Thou glorious mirror, where the Almighty's form
Glasses itself in tempests ; in all time,
Calm or convulsed—in breeze, or gale, or storm,
Icing the pole, or in the torrid clime
Dark-heaving ;—boundless, endless, and sublime—
The image of Eternity—the throne
Of the Invisible ; even from out thy slime
The monsters of the deep are made ; each zone
Obeys thee ; thou goest forth, dread, fathomless, alone.

And I have loved thee, Ocean ! and my joy
Of youthful sports was on thy breast to be
Borne, like they bubbles, onward : from a boy
I wanton'd with thy breakers—they to me
Were a delight ; and if the freshening sea
Made them a terror—'twas a pleasing fear,
For I was as it were a child of thee,
And trusted to thy billows far and near,
And laid my hand upon thy mane—as I do here.

My task is done—my song hath ceased—my theme
Has died into an echo ; it is fit
The spell should break of this protracted dream.
The torch shall be extinguish'd which hath lit
My midnight lamp—and what is writ is writ,—

Would it were worthier ! but I am not now
That which I have been—and my vision flit
Less palpably before me—and the glow
Which in my spirit dwelt is fluttering, faint, and low.

Farewell ! a word that must be, and hath been—
A sound which makes us linger ;—yet—farewell !
Ye ! who have traced the Pilgrim to the scene
Which is his last, if in your memories dwell
A thought which once was his, if on ye swell
A single recollection, not in vain
He wore his sandal-shoon, and scallop-shell ;
Farewell ! with *him* alone may rest the pain,
If such there were—with *you*, the moral of his strain !

A VERY MOURNFUL BALLAD

ON THE SIEGE AND CONQUEST OF ALHAMA

Which, in the Arabic language, is to the following purport.

The Moorish King rides up and down
Through Granada's royal town ;
From Elvira's gates to those
Of Bivarambla on he goes.
Woe is me, Alhama !

Letters to the monarch tell
How Alhama's city fell :
In the fire the scroll he threw,
And the messenger he slew.
Woe is me, Alhama !

He quits his mule, and mounts his horse,
And through the street directs his course ;
Through the street of Zacatin
To the Alhambra spurring in.
Woe is me, Alhama !

When the Alhambra walls he gain'd
On the moment he ordain'd
That the trumpet straight should sound
With the silver clarion round.
Woe is me, Alhama !

And when the hollow drums of war
Beat the loud alarm afar,
That the Moors of town and plain
Might answer to the martial strain,
Woe is me, Alhama !

Then the Moors, by this aware
That bloody Mars recall'd them there,
One by one, and two by two
To a mighty squadron grew.
Woe is me, Alhama !

Out then spake an aged Moor
In these words the king before,
" Wherefore call on us, oh King ?
What may mean this gathering ? "
Woe is me, Alhama !

" Friends ! ye have, alas ! to know
Of a most disastrous blow,
That the Christians, stern and bold,
Have obtain'd Alhama's hold."
Woe is me, Alhama !

Out then spake old Alfaqui,
With his beard so white to see,
" Good King ! thou art justly served,
Good King ! this thou hast deserved.
Woe is me, Alhama !

" By thee were slain, in evil hour,
The Abencerrage, Granada's flower ;
And strangers were received by thee
Of Cordova the Chivalry.
Woe is me, Alhama !

" And for this, oh King ! is sent
On thee a double chastisement :
Thee and thine, thy crown and realm,
One last wreck, shall overwhelm.
Woe is me, Alhama !

" He who holds no laws in awe,
He must perish by the law ;
And Granada must be won,
And thy self with her undone."
Woe is me, Alhama !

Fire flash'd from out the old Moor's eyes,
The Monarch's wrath began to rise,
Because he answer'd, and because
He spake exceeding well of laws.
Woe is me, Alhama !

" There is no law to say such things
As may disgust the ear of kings : "
Thus, snorting with his choler, said
The Moorish King, and doom'd him dead.
Woe is me, Alhama !

Moor Alfaqui ! Moor Alfaqui !
Though thy beard so hoary be,
The King hath sent to have thee seized,
For Alhama's loss displeased.
Woe is me, Alhama !

And to fix thy head upon
High Alhambra's loftiest stone ;
That this for thee should be the law,
And others tremble when they saw.
Woe is me, Alhama !

" Cavalier, and man of worth !
Let these words of mine go forth ;
Let the Moorish Monarch know,
That to him I nothing owe.
Woe is me, Alhama !

" But on my soul Alhama weighs,
And on my inmost spirit preys ;
And if the King his land hath lost,
Yet others may have lost the most.
Woe is me, Alhama !

" Sires have lost their children, wives
Their lords, and valiant men their lives :
One what best his love might claim
Hath lost, another wealth, or fame.
Woe is me, Alhama !

" I lost a damsel in that hour,
Of all the land the loveliest flower ;
Doubloons a hundred I would pay,
And think her ransom cheap that day."
Woe is me, Alhama !

And as these things the old Moor said,
They sever'd from the trunk his head ;
And to the Alhambra's wall with speed
'Twas carried, as the King decreed.
Woe is me, Alhama !

And men and infants therein weep
Their loss, so heavy and so deep ;
Granada's ladies, all she rears
Within her walls, burst into tears.
Woe is me, Alhama !

And from the windows o'er the walls
The sable web of mourning falls ;
The King weeps as a woman o'er
His loss, for it is much and sore.
Woe is me, Alhama !

OH ! SNATCH'D AWAY IN BEAUTY'S BLOOM

Oh ! snatch'd away in beauty's bloom,
On thee shall press no ponderous tomb ;
But on thy turf shall roses rear
Their leaves, the earliest of the year ;
And the wild cypress wave in tender gloom :

And oft by yon blue gushing stream
Shall Sorrow lean her drooping head,
And feed deep thought with many a dream,
And lingering pause and lightly tread ;
Fond wretch ! as if her step disturbed the dead.

Away ! we know that tears are vain,
That death nor heeds nor hears distress :
Will this unteach us to complain ?
Or make one mourner weep the less ?
And thou—who tell'st me to forget,
Thy looks are wan, thine eyes are wet.

VISION OF BELSHAZZAR

The King was on his throne,
The Satraps throng'd the hall ;
A thousand bright lamps shone
O'er that high festival.

A thousand cups of gold,
In Judah deem'd divine—
Jehovah's vessels hold
The godless Heathen's wine!

In that same hour and hall,
The fingers of a hand
Came forth against the wall
And wrote as if on sand :
The fingers of a man ;—
A solitary hand
Along the letters ran,
And traced them like a wand.

The monarch saw, and shook,
And bade no more rejoice ;
All bloodless wax'd his look,
And tremulous his voice.
" Let the men of lore appear,
The wisest of the earth,
And expound the words of fear,
Which mar our royal mirth."

Chaldea's seers are good,
But here they have no skill ;
And the unknown letters stood
Untold and awful still.
And Babel's men of age
Are wise and deep in lore ;
But now they were not sage,
They saw—but knew no more.

A captive in the land,
A stranger and a youth,
He heard the king's command,
He saw that writing's truth.

The lamps around were bright,
The prophecy in view ;
He read it on that night,—
The morrow proved it true.

" Belshazzar's grave is made,
His kingdom pass'd away,
He, in the balance weigh'd,
Is light and worthless clay.
The shroud, his robe of state,
His canopy the stone ;
The Mede is at his gate !
The Persian on his throne ! "

THE DESTRUCTION OF SENNACHERIB

The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold ;
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.

Like the leaves of the forest when Summer is green,
That host with their banners at sunset were seen :
Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn hath blown,
That host on the morrow lay wither'd and strown.

For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast,
And breathed in the face of the foe as he pass'd ;
And the eyes of the sleepers wax'd deadly and chill,
And their hearts but once heaved, and for ever grew still !

And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide,
But through it there roll'd not the breath of his pride :
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,
And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.

And there lay the rider distorted and pale,
With the dew on his brow, and the rust on his mail :
And the tents were all silent, the banners alone,
The lances unlifted, the trumpet unblown.

And the widows of Ashur are loud in their wail,
And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal ;
And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord !

BY THE RIVERS OF BABYLON WE SAT DOWN AND WEPT

We sate down and wept by the waters
  Of Babel, and thought of the day
When our foe, in the hue of his slaughters,
  Made Salem's high places his prey ;
And ye, oh her desolate daughters !
  Were scatter'd all weeping away.

While sadly we gazed on the river
  Which roll'd on in freedom below,
They demanded the song ; but, oh never
  That triumph the stranger shall know !
May this right hand be wither'd for ever,
  Ere it string our high harp for the foe !

On the willow that harp is suspended,
  Oh Salem ! its sound should be free ;
And the hour when thy glories were ended
  But left me that token of thee :
And ne'er shall its soft tones be blended
  With the voice of the spoiler by me !

THE EXILES

The wild gazelle on Judah's hills
  Exulting yet may bound,
And drink from all the living rills
  That gush on holy ground ;
Its airy step and glorious eye
May glance in tameless transport by :—

A step as fleet, an eye more bright,
  Hath Judah witness'd there ;
And o'er her scenes of lost delight
  Inhabitants more fair.
The cedars wave on Lebanon,
But Judah's statelier maids are gone !

More blest each palm that shades those plains
  Than Israel's scatter'd race ;
For, taking root, it there remains
  In solitary grace :
It cannot quit its place of birth,
It will not live in other earth.

But we must wander witheringly,
  In other lands to die ;
And where our fathers' ashes be,
  Our own may never lie :
Our temple hath not left a stone,
And Mockery sits on Salem's throne.

SONG OF SAUL BEFORE HIS LAST BATTLE

Warriors and chiefs ! should the shaft or the sword
Pierce me in leading the host of the Lord,
Heed not the corse, though a king's, in your path :
Bury your steel in the bosoms of Gath !

Thou who art bearing my buckler and bow,
Should the soldiers of Saul look away from the foe,
Stretch me that moment in blood at thy feet!
Mine be the doom which they dared not to meet.

Farewell to others, but never we part,
Heir to my royalty, son of my heart!
Bright is the diadem, boundless the sway,
Or kingly the death, which awaits us to-day!

WHEN COLDNESS WRAPS THIS SUFFERING CLAY

When coldness wraps this suffering clay,
Ah! whither strays the immortal mind?
It cannot die, it cannot stay,
But leaves its darken'd dust behind.
Then, unembodied, doth it trace
By steps each planet's heavenly way?
Or fill at once the realms of space,
A thing of eyes, that all survey?

Eternal, boundless, undecay'd,
A thought unseen, but seeing all,
All, all in earth, or skies display'd,
Shall it survey, shall it recall:
Each fainter trace that memory holds
So darkly of departed years,
In one broad glance the soul beholds,
And all, that was, at once appears.

Before Creation peopled earth,
Its eye shall roll through chaos back;
And where the furthest heaven had birth,
The spirit trace its rising track.
And where the future mars or makes,
Its glance, dilate o'er all to be,
While sun is quench'd or system breaks,
Fix'd in its own eternity.

Above or Love, Hope, Hate, or Fear,
It lives all passionless and pure :
An age shall fleet like earthly year ;
Its years as moments shall endure.
Away, away, without a wing,
O'er all, through all, its thought shall fly
A nameless and eternal thing,
Forgetting what it was to die.

FOR MUSIC

I speak not, I trace not, I breathe not thy name,
There is grief in the sound, there is guilt in the fame :
But the tear which now burns on my cheek may impart
The deep thoughts that dwell in that silence of heart.

Too brief for our passion, too long for our peace
Were those hours—can their joy or their bitterness cease ?
We repent—we abjure—we will break from our chain,—
We will part,—we will fly to—unite it again !

Oh ! thine be the gladness, and mine be the guilt !
Forgive me, adored one !—forsake, if thou wilt ;—
But the heart which is thine shall expire undebased,
And *man* shall not break it—whatever *thou* mayst.

And stern to the haughty, but humble to thee,
This soul, in its bitterest blackness, shall be ;
And our days seem as swift, and our moments more sweet,
With thee by my side, than with worlds at our feet.

One sigh of thy sorrow, one look of thy love,
Shall turn me or fix, shall reward or reprove ;
And the heartless may wonder at all I resign—
Thy lip shall reply, not to them, but to *mine*.

POEMS TO AUGUSTA

I.—When All Around Grew Drear and Dark

When all around grew drear and dark,
  And reason half withheld her ray—
And hope but shed a dying spark
  Which more misled my lonely way ;

In that deep midnight of the mind,
  And that internal strife of heart,
When dreading to be deem'd too kind,
  The weak despair—the cold depart ;

When fortune changed—and love fled far,
  And hatred's shafts flew thick and fast,
Thou wert the solitary star
  Which rose and set not to the last.

Oh ! blest be thine unbroken light !
  That watch'd me as a seraph's eye,
And stood between me and the night,
  For ever shining sweetly nigh.

And when the cloud upon us came,
  Which strove to blacken o'er thy ray—
Then purer spread its gentle flame,
  And dash'd the darkness all away,

Still may thy spirit dwell on mine,
  And teach it what to brave or brook—
There's more in one soft word of thine
  Than in the world's defied rebuke.

Thou stood'st, as stands a lovely tree,
That still unbroke, though gently bent,
Still waves with fond fidelity
Its boughs above a monument.

The winds might rend—the skies might pour,
But there thou wert—and still would'st be
Devoted in the stormiest hour
To shed thy weeping leaves o'er me.

But thou and thine shall know no blight,
Whatever fate on me may fall ;
For heaven in sunshine will requite
The kind—and thee the most of all.

Then let the ties of baffled love
Be broken—thine will never break ;
Thy heart can feel—but will not move ;
Thy soul, though soft, will never shake.

And these, when all was lost beside,
Were found and still are fix'd in thee ;—
And bearing still a breast so tried,
Earth is no desert—ev'n to me.

II.—Though the Day of My Destiny's Over

Though the day of my destiny's over,
And the star of my fate hath declined,
Thy soft heart refused to discover
The faults which so many could find ;
Though thy soul with my grief was acquainted,
It shrunk not to share it with me,
And the love which my spirit hath painted
It never hath found but in *thee*.

Then when nature around me is smiling,
The last smile which answers to mine,
I do not believe it beguiling,
Because it reminds me of thine ;
And when winds are at war with the ocean,
As the breasts I believed in with me,
If their bellows excite an emotion,
It is that they bear me from *thee*.

Though the rock of my last hope is shiver'd,
And its fragments are sunk in the wave,
Though I feel that my soul is deliver'd
To pain—it shall not be its slave.
There is many a pang to pursue me ;
They may crush, but they shall not contemn—
They may torture, but shall not subdue me—
'Tis of *thee* that I think—not of them.

Though human, thou didst not deceive me,
Though woman, thou didst not forsake,
Though loved, thou forborest to grieve me,
Though slander'd, thou never couldst shake,—
Though trusted, thou didst not disclaim me,
Though parted, it was not to fly,
Though watchful, 'twas not to defame me,
Nor, mute, that the world might belie.

Yet I blame not the world, nor despise it,
Nor the war of the many with one—
If my soul was not fitted to prize it,
'Twas folly not sooner to shun :
And if dearly that error hath cost me,
And more than I once could foresee,
I have found that, whatever it lost me,
It could not deprive me of *thee*.

From the wreck of the past, which hath perish'd,
Thus much I at least may recall,
It hath taught me that what I most cherish'd
Deserved to be dearest of all :
In the desert a fountain is springing,
In the wide waste there still is a tree,
And a bird in the solitude singing,
Which speaks to my spirit of *thee*.

July 24, 1816.

III.—My Sister ! My Sweet Sister !

My sister ! my sweet sister ! if a name
Dearer and purer were, it should be thine.
Mountains and seas divide us, but I claim
No tears, but tenderness to answer mine :
Go where I will, to me thou art the same—
A loved regret which I would not resign.
There yet are two things in my destiny,—
A world to roam through, and a home with thee.

The first were nothing—had I still the last,
It were the haven of my happiness ;
But other claims and other ties thou hast,
And mine is not the wish to make them less.
A strange doom is thy father's son's, and past
Recalling, as it lies beyond redress ;
Reversed for him our grandsire's fate of yore,—
He had no rest at sea, nor I on shore.

If my inheritance of storms hath been
In other elements, and on the rocks
Of perils, overlook'd or unforeseen,
I have sustain'd my share of worldly shocks,
The fault was mine ; nor I do seek to screen
My errors with defensive paradox ;
I have been cunning in mine overthrow,
The careful pilot of my proper woe.

Mine were my faults, and mine be their reward.
My whole life was a contest, since the day
That gave me being, gave me that which marr'd
The gift,—a fate, or will, that walk'd astray ;
And I at times have found the struggle hard,
And thought of shaking off my bonds of clay :
But now I fain would for a time survive,
If but to see what next can well arrive.

Kingdoms and empires in my little day
I have outlived, and yet I am not old ;
And when I look on this, the petty spray
Of my own years of trouble, which have roll'd
Like a wild bay of breakers, melts away :
Something—I know not what—does still uphold
A spirit of slight patience ;—not in vain,
Even for its own sake, do we purchase pain.

Perhaps the working of defiance stir
Within me,—or perhaps a cold despair,
Brought on when ills habitually recur—
Perhaps a kinder clime, or purer air,
(For even to this may change of soul refer,
And with light armour we may learn to bear),
Have taught me a strange quiet, which was not
The chief companion of a calmer lot.

I feel almost at times as I have felt
In happy childhood ; trees, and flowers, and brooks,
Which do remember me of where I dwelt
Ere my young mind was sacrificed to books,
Come as of yore upon me, and can melt
My heart with recognition of their looks ;
And even at moments I could think I see
Some living thing to love—but none like thee.

Here are the Alpine landscapes which create
A fund for contemplation ;—to admire
Is a brief feeling of a trivial date ;
But something worthier do such scenes inspire :
Here to be lonely is not desolate,
For much I view which I could most desire,
And, above all, a lake I can behold
Lovelier, not dearer, than our own of old.

Oh that thou wert but with me !—but I grow
The fool of my own wishes, and forget
The solitude which I have vaunted so
Has lost its praise in this but one regret ;
There may be others which I less may show ;—
I am not of the plaintive mood, and yet
I feel an ebb in my philosophy,
And the tide rising in my alter'd eye.

I did remind thee of our own dear Lake,
By the old Hall which may be mine no more.
Leman's is fair ; but think not I forsake
The sweet remembrance of a dearer shore :
Sad havoc Time must with my memory make
Ere *that* or *thou* can fade these eyes before ;
Though, like all things which I have loved, they are
Resign'd for ever, or divided far.

The world is all before me ; I but ask
Of Nature that with which she will comply—
It is but in her summer's sun to bask,
To mingle with the quiet of her sky,
To see her gentle face without a mask,
And never gaze on it with apathy.
She was my early friend, and now shall be
My sister—till I look again on thee.

I can reduce all feelings but this one ;
And that I would not ;—for at length I see
Such scenes as those wherein my life begun.
The earliest—even the only paths for me—
Had I but sooner learnt the crowd to shun,
I had been better than I now can be ;
The passions which have torn me would have slept ;
I had not suffer'd, and *thou* hadst not wept.

With false Ambition what had I to do ?
Little with Love, and least of all with Fame ;
And yet they came unsought, and with me grew,
And made me all which they can make—a name.
Yet this was not the end I did pursue ;
Surely I once beheld a nobler aim.
But all is over—I am one the more
To baffled millions which have gone before.

And for the future, this world's future may
From me demand but little of my care ;
I have outlived myself by many a day ;
Having survived so many things that were ;
My years have been no slumber, but the prey
Of ceaseless vigils ; for I had the share
Of life which might have fill'd a century,
Before its fourth in time had pass'd me by.

And for the remnant which may be to come
I am content ; and for the past I feel
Not thankless,—for within the crowded sum
Of struggles, happiness at times would steal,
And for the present, I would not benumb
My feelings farther.—Nor shall I conceal
That with all this I still can look around
And worship Nature with a thought profound.

For thee, my own sweet sister, in thy heart
I know myself secure, as thou in mine ;
We were and are—I am, even as thou art—
Beings who ne'er each other can resign ;
It is the same, together or apart,
From life's commencement to its slow decline
We are entwined—let death come slow or fast,
The tie which bound the first endures the last !

POEMS TO THYRZA

I

Without a stone to mark the spot,
And say, what Truth might well have said,
By all, save one, perchance forgot,
Ah ! wherefore art thou lowly laid ?

By many a shore and many a sea
Divided, yet beloved in vain ;
The past, the future fled to thee
To bid us meet—no—ne'er again !

Could this have been—a word, a look
That softly said, " We part in peace,"
Had taught my bosom how to brook,
With fainter sighs, thy soul's release.

And didst thou not, since Death for thee
Prepared a light and pangless dart,
Once long for him thou ne'er shalt see,
Who held, and holds thee in his heart ?

Oh ! who like him had watched thee here ?
Or sadly mark'd thy glazing eye,
In that dread hour ere death appear,
When silent sorrow fears to sigh,

Till all was past ? But when no more
'Twas thine to reck of human woe,
Affection's heart-drops, gushing o'er
Had flow'd as fast—as now they flow.

Shall they not flow, when many a day
In these, to me, deserted towers,
Ere call'd but for a time away,
Affection's mingling tears were ours ?

Ours too the glance none saw beside ;
The smile none else might understand ;
The whisper'd thought of hearts allied,
The pressure of the thrilling hand ;

The kiss, so guiltless and refined
That Love each warmer wish forbore ;
Those eyes proclaim'd so pure a mind,
Even passion blush'd to plead for more.

The tone, that taught me to rejoice,
When prone, unlike thee, to repine ;
The song, celestial from thy voice,
But sweet to me from none but thine ;

The pledge we wore—I wear it still,
But where is thine ?—Ah ! where art thou ?
Oft have I borne the weight of ill,
But never bent beneath till now !

Well hast thou left in life's best bloom
The cup of woe for me to drain.
If rest alone be in the tomb,
I would not wish thee here again ;

But if in worlds more blest than this
Thy virtues seek a fitter sphere,
Impart some portion of thy bliss,
To wean me from mine anguish here.

Teach me—too early taught by thee !
To bear, forgiving and forgiven :
On earth thy love was such to me ;
It fain would form my hope in heaven !

October 11, 1811.

II

Away, away, ye notes of woe !
Be silent, thou once soothing strain,
Or I must flee from hence—for, oh !
I dare not trust those sounds again.
To me they speak of brighter days—
But lull the chords, for now, alas !
I must not think, I may not gaze
On what I am—on what I was.

The voice that made those sounds more sweet
Is hush'd and all their charms are fled ;
And now their softest notes repeat
A dirge, an anthem o'er the dead !
Yes, Thyrza ! yes, they breathe of thee,
Beloved dust ! since dust thou art ;
And all that once was harmony
Is worse than discord to my heart !

'Tis silent all !—but on my ear
The well remember'd echoes thrill ;
I hear a voice I would not hear,
A voice that now might well be still :
Yet oft my doubting soul 'twill shake ;
Even slumber owns its gentle tone,
Till consciousness will vainly wake
To listen, though the dream be flown.

Sweet Thyrza ! waking as in sleep,
Thou art but now a lovely dream ;
A star that trembled o'er the deep,
Then turned from earth its tender beam,
But he who through life's dreary way
Must pass, when heaven is veil'd in wrath,
Will long lament the vanish'd ray
That scatter'd gladness o'er his path.

December 6, 1811.

III

One struggle more, and I am free
From pangs that rend my heart in twain ;
One last long sigh to love and thee,
Then back to busy life again.
It suits me well to mingle now
With things that never pleased before :
Though every joy is fled below,
What future grief can touch me more ?

Then bring me wine, the banquet bring ;
Man was not form'd to live alone :
I'll be that light, unmeaning thing
That smiles with all, and weeps with none.
It was not thus in days more dear,
It never would have been, but thou
Hast fled, and left me lonely here ;
Thou'rt nothing,—all are nothing now.

In vain my lyre would lightly breathe !
The smile that sorrow fain would wear
But mocks the woe that lurks beneath,
Like roses o'er a sepulchre.
Though gay companions o'er the bowl
Dispel awhile the sense of ill ;
Though pleasure fires the maddening soul
The heart—the heart is lonely still !

On many a lone and lovely night
It sooth'd to gaze upon the sky ;
For then I deem'd the heavenly light
Shone sweetly on thy pensive eye :
And oft I thought at Cynthia's noon,
When sailing o'er the Ægean wave,
" Now Thyrza gazes on that moon—"
Alas, it gleam'd upon her grave !

When stretch'd on fever's sleepless bed,
And sickness shrunk my throbbing veins,
" 'Tis comfort still," I faintly said,
" That Thyrza cannot know my pains : "
Like freedom to the time-worn slave,
A boon 'tis idle then to give,
Relenting Nature vainly gave
My life, when Thyrza ceased to live !

My Thyrza's pledge in better days,
When love and life alike were new !
How different now thou meet'st my gaze !
How tinged by time with sorrow's hue !
The heart that gave itself with thee
Is silent—ah, were mine as still !
Though cold as e'er the dead can be,
It feels, it sickens with the chill.

Thou bitter pledge ! thou mournful token !
Though painful, welcome to my breast !
Still, still, preserve that love unbroken,
Or break the heart to which thou'rt press'd !
Time tempers love, but not removes,
More hallow'd when its hope is fled :
Oh ! what are thousand living loves
To that which cannot quit the dead ?

IV

Euthanasia

When time, or soon or late, shall bring
The dreamless sleep that lulls the dead.
Oblivion ! may thy languid wing
Wave gently o'er my dying bed !

No band of friends or heirs be there,
To weep, or wish, the coming blow :
No maiden, with dishevell'd hair
To feel, or feign, decorous woe.

But silent let me sink to earth,
With no officious mourners near :
I would not mar one hour of mirth,
Nor startle friendship with a fear.

Yet Love, if Love in such an hour
Could nobly check its useless sighs,
Might then exert its latest power
In her who lives and him who dies.

'Twere sweet, my Psyche ! to the last
Thy features still serene to see :
Forgetful of its struggles past,
E'en Pain itself should smile on thee.

But vain the wish—for Beauty still
Will shrink, as shrinks the ebbing breath ;
And woman's tears, produced at will,
Deceive in life, unman in death.

Then lonely be my latest hour,
Without regret, without a groan ;
For thousands Death hath ceased to lower,
And pain been transient or unknown.

" Ay, but to die, and go," alas !
Where all have gone, and all must go !
To be the nothing that I was
Ere born to life and living woe !

Count o'er the joys thine hours have seen,
Count o'er thy days from anguish free,
And know, whatever thou hast been,
'Tis something better not to be.

V

" Heu, quanto minus est cum reliquis versari
quam tui meminisse ! "

And thou art dead, as young and fair
As aught of mortal birth ;
And form so soft, and charms so rare,
Too soon return'd to Earth !
Though Earth received them in her bed,
And o'er the spot the crowd may tread
In carelessness or mirth,
There is an eye which could not brook
A moment on that grave to look.

I will not ask where thou liest low,
Nor gaze upon the spot ;
There flowers or weeds at will may grow,
So I behold them not :
It is enough for me to prove
That what I loved, and long must love,
Like common earth can rot ;
To me there needs no stone to tell,
'Tis Nothing that I loved so well.

Yet did I love thee to the last
As fervently as thou,
Who didst not change through all the past,
And canst not alter now.

The love where Death has set his seal,
Nor age can chill, nor rival steal,
Nor falsehood disavow :
And, what were worse, thou canst not see
Or wrong, or change, or fault in me.

The better days of life were ours ;
The worst can be but mine :
The sun that cheers, the storm that lowers,
Shall never more be thine.
The silence of that dreamless sleep
I envy now too much to weep ;
Nor need I to repine
That all those charms have pass'd away ;
I might have watch'd through long decay.

The flower in ripen'd bloom unmatch'd
Must fall the earliest prey ;
Though by no hand untimely snatch'd,
The leaves must drop away :
And yet it were a greater grief
To watch it withering, leaf by leaf,
Than see it pluck'd to-day ;
Since earthly eye but ill can bear
To trace the change to foul from fair.

I know not if I could have borne
To see thy beauties fade ;
The night that follow'd such a morn
Had worn a deeper shade :
Thy day without a cloud hath pass'd,
And thou wert lovely to the last ;
Extinguish'd, not decay'd ;
As stars that shoot along the sky
Shine brightest as they fall from high.

As once I wept, if I could weep,
My tears might well be shed,
To think I was not near to keep
One vigil o'er thy bed ;
To gaze, how fondly ! on thy face,
To fold thee in a faint embrace,
Uphold thy drooping head ;
And show that love, however vain,
Nor thou nor I can feel again.

Yet how much less it were to gain.
Though thou hast left me free,
The loveliest things that still remain,
Than thus remember thee !
The all of thine that cannot die
Through dark and dread Eternity
Returns again to me,
And more thy buried love endears
Than aught, except its living years.

February, 1812.

VI

If sometimes in the haunts of men
Thine image from my breast may fade,
The lonely hour presents again
The semblance of thy gentle shade ;
And now that sad and silent hour
Thus much of thee can still restore,
And sorrow unobserved may pour
The plaint she dare not speak before.

Oh, pardon that in crowds awhile
I waste one thought I owe to thee,
And self-condemn'd, appear to smile,
Unfaithful to thy Memory !

Nor deem that memory less dear,
That then I seem not to repine ;
I would not fools should overhear
One sigh that should be wholly *thine*.

If not the goblet pass unquaff'd,
It is not drain'd to banish care ;
The cup must hold a deadlier draught,
That brings a Lethe for despair,
And could Oblivion set my soul
From all her troubled visions free,
I'd dash to earth the sweetest bowl
That drown'd a single thought of thee.

For wert thou vanish'd from my mind.
Where could my vacant bosom turn ?
And who would then remain behind
To honour thine abandon'd Urn ?
No, no—it is my sorrow's pride
That last dear duty to fulfil ;
Though all the world forgot beside,
'Tis meet that I remember still

For well I know, that such had been
Thy gentle care for him, who now
Unmourn'd shall quit this mortal scene,
Where none regarded him, but thou :
And, oh ! I feel in *that* was given
A blessing never meant for me ;
Thou wert too like a dream of Heaven
For earthly Love to merit thee.

March 14, 1812.

LARA

The Serfs are glad through Lara's wide domain,
And Slavery half forgets her feudal chain ;
He, their unhoped, but unforgotten lord,
The long self-exiled chieftain, is restored :

There be bright faces in the busy hall,
Bowls on the board, and banners on the wall ;
Far checkering o'er the pictured window, plays
The unwonted faggots' hospitable blaze ;
And gay retainers gather round the hearth,
With tongues all loudness, and with eyes all mirth.

The chief of Lara is return'd again :
And why had Lara cross'd the bounding main ?
Left by his sire, too young such loss to know,
Lord of himself ;—that heritage of woe,
That fearful empire which the human breast
But holds to rob the heart within of rest !—
With none to check, and few to point in time
The thousand paths that slope the way to crime ;
Then, when he most required commandment, then
Had Lara's daring boyhood govern'd men.
It skills not, boots not step by step to trace
His youth through all the mazes of its race ;
Short was the course his restlessness had run,
But long enough to leave him half undone.

And Lara left in youth his father-land ;
But from the hour he waved his parting hand
Each trace wax'd fainter of his course, till all
Had nearly ceased his memory to recall.
His sire was dust, his vassals could declare,
'Twas all they knew, that Lara was not there ;
Nor sent, nor came he, till conjecture grew
Cold in the many, anxious in the few.
His hall scarce echoes with his wonted name,
His portrait darkens in its fading frame,
Another chief consoled his destined bride,
The young forgot him, and the old had died ;
" Yet doth he live ! " exclaims the impatient heir,
And sighs for sables which he must not wear.

A hundred scutcheons deck with gloomy grace
The Laras' last and longest dwelling-place ;
But one is absent from the mouldering file,
That now were welcome in that Gothic pile.

He comes at last in sudden loneliness,
And whence they know not, why they need not guess ;
They more might marvel, when the greeting's o'er,
Not that he came, but came not long before :
No train is his beyond a single page,
Of foreign aspect, and of tender age.
Years had roll'd on, and fast they speed away
To those that wander as to those that stay ;
But lack of tidings from another clime
Had lent a flagging wing to weary Time.
They see, they recognise, yet almost deem
The present dubious, or the past a dream.

He lives, nor yet is past his manhood's prime,
Though sear'd by toil, and something touch'd by time ;
His faults, whate'er they were, if scarce forgot,
Might be untaught him by his varied lot ;
Nor good nor ill of late were known, his name
Might yet uphold his patrimonial fame :
His soul in youth was haughty, but his sins
No more than pleasure from the stripling wins ;
And such, if not yet harden'd in their course,
Might be redeem'd, nor ask a long remorse.

And they indeed were changed—'tis quickly seen
Whate'er he be, 'twas not what he had been :
That brow in furrow'd lines had fix'd at last,
And spake of passions, but of passion past :
The pride, but not the fire of early days,
Coldness of mien, and carelessness of praise ;
A high demeanour, and a glance that took
Their thoughts from others by a single look ;

And that sarcastic levity of tongue,
The stinging of a heart the world hath stung,
That darts in seeming playfulness around,
And makes those feel that will not own the wound ;
All these seem'd his, and something more beneath
Than glance could well reveal, or accent breathe.
Ambition, glory, love, the common aim,
That some can conquer, and that all would claim,
Within his breast appear'd no more to strive,
Yet seem'd as lately they had been alive ;
And some deep feeling it were vain to trace
At moments lighten'd o'er his livid face.

Not much he loved long question of the past,
Nor told of wondrous wilds, and deserts vast,
In those far lands where he had wander'd lone,
And—as himself would have it seem—unknown :
Yet these in vain his eye could scarcely scan,
Nor glean experience from his fellow man ;
But what he had beheld he shunn'd to show,
As hardly worth a stranger's care to know ;
If still more prying such enquiry grew,
His brow fell darker, and his words more few,

Not unrejoiced to see him once again,
Warm was his welcome to the haunts of men ;
Born of high lineage, link'd in high command,
He mingled with the Magnates of his land ;
Join'd the carousals of the great and gay,
And saw them smile or sigh their hours away ;
But still he only saw, and did not share,
The common pleasure or the general care ;
He did not follow what they all pursued
With hope still baffled still to be renew'd ;
Nor shadowy honour, nor substantial gain,
Nor beauty's preference, and the rival's pain :

Around him some mysterious circle thrown
Repell'd approach, and show'd him still alone;
Upon his eye sat something of reproof,
That kept at least frivolity aloof ;
And things more timid that beheld him near,
In silence gazed, or whisper'd mutual fear ;
And they the wiser, friendlier few confess'd
They deem'd him better than his air express'd.

'Twas strange—in youth all action and all life,
Burning for pleasure, not averse from strife ;
Woman—the field—the ocean—all that gave
Promise of gladness, peril of a grave,
In turn he tried—he ransack'd all below,
And found his recompense in joy or woe,
No tame, trite medium ; for his feelings sought
In that intenseness an escape from thought :
The tempest of his heart in scorn had gazed
On that the feebler elements hath raised ;
The rapture of his heart had look'd on high,
And ask'd if greater dwelt beyond the sky :
Chain'd to excess, the slave of each extreme,
How woke he from the wildness of that dream ?
Alas ! he told not—but he did awake
To curse the wither'd heart that would not break.

Books, for his volume heretofore was Man,
With eye more curious he appear'd to scan,
And oft, in sudden mood, for many a day,
From all communion he would start away :
And then, his rarely call'd attendants said,
Through night's long hours would sound his hurried tread
O'er the dark gallery, where his fathers frown'd
In rude but antique portraiture around :
They heard, but whisper'd—" that must not be known —
The sound of words less earthly than his own.

Yes, they who chose might smile, but some had seen
They scarce knew what, but more than should have been.
Why gazed he so upon the ghastly head
Which hands profane had gather'd from the dead,
That still beside his open'd volume lay,
As if to startle all save him away ?
Why slept he not when others were at rest ?
Why heard no music, and received no guest ?
All was not well, they deem'd—but where the wrong ?
Some new perchance—but 'twere a tale too long ;
And such besides were discreetly wise,
To more than hint their knowledge in surmise ;
But if they would—they could "—around the board,
Thus Lara's vassals prattled of their lord.

I HAVE NOT LOVED THE WORLD

I have not loved the world, nor the world me ;
I have not flatter'd its rank breath, nor bow'd
To its idolatries a patient knee,—
Nor coin'd my cheek to smiles,—nor cried aloud
In worship of an echo ; in the crowd
They could not deem me one of such ; I stood
Among them, but not of them ; in a shroud
Of thoughts which were not their thoughts, and still could,
Had I not filed my mind, which thus itself subdued.

I have not loved the world, nor the world me,—
But let us part fair foes ; I do believe,
Though I have found them not, that there may be
Words which are things,—hopes which will not deceive,
And virtues which are merciful, nor weave
Snares for the failing ; I would also deem
O'er others' griefs that some sincerely grieve ;
That two, or one, are almost what they seem,—
That goodness is no name, and happiness no dream.

Childe Harold.

THE ISLES OF GREECE

The isles of Greece, the isles of Greece !
  Where burning Sappho loved and sung,
Where grew the arts of war and peace,—
  Where Delos rose, and Phœbus sprung !
Eternal summer gilds them yet,
But all, except their sun, is set.

The Scian and the Teian muse,
  The hero's harp, the lover's lute,
Have found the fame your shores refuse ;
  Their place of birth alone is mute
To sounds which echo further west
Than your sires' " Islands of the Blest."

The mountains look on Marathon
  And Marathon looks on the sea ;
And, musing there an hour alone,
  I dream'd that Greece might still be free ;
For, standing on the Persians' grave,
I could not deem myself a slave.

A king sate on the rocky brow
  Which looks o'er sea-born Salamis !
And ships, by thousands, lay below,
  And men in nations ;—all were his !
He counted them at break of day—
And when the sun set where were they ?

And where are they ? and where art thou,
  My country ? On thy voiceless shore
The heroic lay is tuneless now—
  The heroic bosom beats no more !
And must thy lyre, so long divine,
Degenerate into hands like mine ?

'Tis something, in the dearth of fame,
Though link'd among a fetter'd race,
To feel at least a patriot's shame,
Even as I sing, suffuse my face ;
For what is left the poet here ?
For Greeks a blush—for Greece a tear.

Must *we* but weep o'er days more blest ?
Must *we* but blush ?—Our fathers bled.
Earth ! render back from out thy breast
A remnant of our Spartan dead !
Of the three hundred grant but three,
To make a new Thermopylæ !

What, silent still ? and silent all ?
Ah ! no ;—the voices of the dead
Sound like a distant torrent's fall,
And answer, " Let one living head,
But one arise,—we come, we come ! "
'Tis but the living who are dumb.

In vain—in vain : strike other chords ;
Fill high the cup with Samian wine !
Leave battles to the Turkish hordes,
And shed the blood of Scio's vine !
Hark ! rising to the ignoble call—
How answers each bold Bacchanal !

You have the Pyrrhic dance as yet,
Where is the Pyrrhic phalanx gone ?
Of two such lessons, why forget
The nobler and the manlier one ?
You have the letters Cadmus gave—
Think ye he meant them for a slave ?

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine !
We will not think of themes like these !
It made Anacreon's song divine :
He served—but served Polycrates—
A tyrant ; but our masters then
Were still, at least, our countrymen.

The tyrant of the Chersonese
Was freedom's best and bravest friend ;
That tyrant was Miltiades !
Oh ! that the present hour would lend
Another despot of the kind !
Such chains as his were sure to bind.

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine !
On Suli's rock, and Parga's shore,
Exists the remnant of a line
Such as the Doric mothers bore ;
And there, perhaps, some seed is sown,
The Heracleidan blood might own.

Trust not for freedom to the Franks—
They have a king who buys and sells :
In native swords, and native ranks,
The only hope of courage dwells ;
But Turkish force, and Latin fraud,
Would break your shield, however broad.

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine !
Our virgins dance beneath the shade—
I see their glorious black eyes shine ;
But gazing on each glowing maid,
My own the burning tear-drop laves
To think such breasts must suckle slaves.

Place me on Sunium's marbled steep,
  Where nothing, save the waves and I,
May hear our mutual murmurs sweep ;
  There, swan-like, let me sing and die :
A land of slaves shall ne'er be mine—
Dash down yon cup of Samian wine !

KNOW YE THE LAND WHERE THE CYPRESS AND MYRTLE

Know ye the land where the cypress and myrtle
  Are emblems of deeds that are done in their clime,
Where the rage of the vulture, the love of the turtle,
  Now melt into sorrow, now madden to crime ?
Know ye the land of the cedar and vine,
Where the flowers ever blossom, the beams ever shine ;
Where the light wings of Zephyr, oppress'd with perfume,
Wax faint o'er the gardens of Gul in her bloom ;
Where the citron and olive are fairest of fruit,
And the voice of the nightingale never is mute :
Where the tints of the earth, and the hues of the sky,
In colour though varied, in beauty may vie,
And the purple of Ocean is deepest in dye ;
Where the virgins are soft as the roses they twine,
And all, save the spirit of man, is divine ?
'Tis the clime of the East ; 'tis the land of the Sun.
Can he smile on such deeds as his children have done ?
Oh ! wild as the accents of lovers' farewell
Are the hearts which they bear, and the tales which they tell.

ON PARTING

The kiss, dear maid ! thy lip has left
Shall never part from mine,
Till happier hours restore the gift
Untainted back to thine.

Thy parting glance, which fondly beams,
An equal love may see :
The tear that from thine eyelid streams
Can weep no change in me.

I ask no pledge to make me blest
In gazing when alone ;
Nor one memorial for a breast,
Whose thoughts are all thine own.

Nor need I write—to tell the tale
My pen were doubly weak :
Oh ! what can idle words avail,
Unless the heart could speak ?

By day or night, in weal or woe,
That heart, no longer free,
Must bear the love it cannot show
And silent ache for thee.

March, 1811.

PROMETHEUS

Titan ! to whose immortal eyes
  The sufferings of mortality,
  Seen in their sad reality,
Were not as things that gods despise ;
What was thy pity's recompense ?
A silent suffering, and intense ;
The rock, the vulture, and the chain,
All that the proud can feel of pain,
The agony they do not show,
The suffocating sense of woe,
  Which speaks but in its loneliness,
And then is jealous lest the sky
Should have a listener, nor will sigh
  Until its voice is echoless.

Titan ! to thee the strife was given
  Between the suffering and the will,
  Which torture where they cannot kill ;
And the inexorable Heaven,
And the deaf tyranny of Fate,
The ruling principle of Hate,
Which for its pleasure doth create
The things it may annihilate,
Refused thee even the boon to die :
The wretched gift eternity

Was thine—and thou hast borne it well.
All that the Thunderer wrung from thee
Was but the menace which flung back
On him the torments of thy rack ;
The fate thou didst so well foresee,
But would not to appease him tell ;
And in thy Silence was his Sentence,
And in his Soul a vain repentance,
And evil dread so ill dissembled
That in his hand the lightnings trembled.

Thy Godlike crime was to be kind,
  To render with thy precepts less
  The sum of human wretchedness,
And strengthen Man with his own mind ;
But baffled as thou wert from high,
Still in thy patient energy,
In the endurance, and repulse
  Of thine impenetrable Spirit,
Which Earth and Heaven could not convulse,
  A mighty lesson we inherit.

Thou art a symbol and a sign
  To Mortals of their fate and force ;
Like thee, Man is in part divine,
  A troubled stream from a pure source ;
And Man in portions can foresee
His own funereal destiny ;
His wretchedness, and his resistance,
And his sad unallied existence :
To which his Spirit may oppose
Itself—and equal to all woes,
  And a firm will, and a deep sense,
Which even in torture can descry
  Its own concenter'd recompense,
Triumphant where it dares defy,
And making Death a Victory.

DIODATI, *July* 1816.

SUN OF THE SLEEPLESS

Sun of the sleepless ! melancholy star !
Whose tearful beam glows tremulously far,
That show'st the darkness thou canst not dispel,
How like art thou to joy remember'd well !

So gleams the past, the light of other days,
Which shines, but warms not with powerless rays ;
A night-beam Sorrow watcheth to behold,
Distinct, but distant—clear—but, oh how cold !

ROME

Oh Rome ! my country ! city of the soul !
The orphans of the heart must turn to thee,
Lone mother of dead empires ! and control
In their shut breasts their petty misery.
What are our woes and sufferance ? Come and see
The cypress, hear the owl, and plod your way
O'er steps of broken thrones and temples, Ye !
Whose agonies are evils of a day—
A world is at our feet as fragile as our clay.

The Niobe of nations ! there she stands,
Childless and crownless, in her voiceless woe ;
An empty urn within her wither'd hands,
Whose holy dust was scatter'd long ago ;
The Scipios' tomb contains no ashes now ;
The very sepulchres lie tenantless
Of their heroic dwellers : dost thou flow,
Old Tiber ! through a marble wilderness ?
Rise, with thy yellow waves, and mantle her distress.

The Goth, the Christian, Time, War, Flood, and Fire,
Have dealt upon the seven-hill'd city's pride ;
She saw her glories star by star expire,
And up the steep barbarian monarchs ride,
Where the car climb'd the capitol ; far and wide
Temple and tower went down, nor left a site :—
Chaos of ruins ! who shall trace the void,
O'er the dim fragments cast a lunar light,
And say, " here was, or is," where all is doubly night ?

The double night of ages, and of her,
Night's daughter, Ignorance, hath wrapt and wrap
All round us ; we but feel our way to err ;
The ocean hath his chart, the stars their map,

And Knowledge spreads them on her ample lap ;
But Rome is as the desert, where we steer
Stumbling o'er recollections ; now we clap
Our hands, and cry " Eureka ! " it is clear—
When but some false mirage of ruin rises near.

Alas ! the lofty city ! and alas !
The treble hundred triumphs ! and the day
When Brutus made the dagger's edge surpass
The conqueror's sword in bearing fame away !
Alas, for Tully's voice, and Vergil's lay,
And Livy's pictured page !—but these shall be
Her resurrection : all beside—decay.
Alas, for Earth, for never shall we see
That brightness in her eye she bore when Rome was free !

Childe Harold.

THE DYING GLADIATOR

I see before me the Gladiator lie :
He leans upon his hand—his manly brow
Consents to death, but conquers agony,
And his droop'd head sinks gradually low—
And through his side the last drops, ebbing slow
From the red gash, fall heavy, one by one,
Like the first of a thunder-shower ; and now
The arena swims around him—he is gone,
Ere ceased the inhuman shout which hail'd the wretch who won.

He heard it, but he heeded not—his eyes
Were with his heart, and that was far away ;
He reck'd not of the life he lost nor prize,
But where his rude hut by the Danube lay ;
There were his young barbarians all at play.

There was their Dacian mother—he, their sire,
Butcher'd to make a Roman holiday—
All this rush'd with his blood—Shall he expire,
And unavenged ?—Arise, ye Goths ! and glut your ire.

But here, where Murder breathed her bloody steam ;
And here, where buzzing nations choked the ways,
And roar'd or murmur'd like a mountain stream
Dashing or winding as its torrent strays ;
Here, where the Roman million's blame or praise
Was death or life, the playthings of a crowd,
My voice sounds much—and fall the star's faint rays
On the arena void—seats crush'd—walls bow'd—
And galleries, where my steps seem echoes strangely loud.

A ruin—yet what ruin ! from its mass
Walls, palaces, half-cities, have been rear'd ;
Yet oft the enormous skeleton ye pass,
And marvel where the spoil could have appear'd.
Hath it indeed been plunder'd, or but clear'd ?
Alas ! developed, opens the decay,
When the colossal fabric's form is near'd :
It will not bear the brightness of the day,
Which streams too much on all years, man, have reft away.

But when the rising moon begins to climb
Its topmast arch, and gently pauses there ;
When the stars twinkle through the loops of time,
And the low night-breeze waves along the air
The garland forest, which the grey walls wear,
Like laurels on the bald first Cæsar's head ;
When the light shines serene but doth not glare,
Then in this magic circle raise the dead :
Heroes have trod this spot—'tis on their dust ye tread.

" While stands the Coliseum, Rome shall stand ;
" When falls the Coliseum, Rome shall fall ;
" And when Rome falls—the world." From our own land
Thus spake the pilgrims o'er this mighty wall
In Saxon times, which we are wont to call
Ancient ; and these three mortal things are still
On their foundations, and unalter'd all ;
Rome and her ruin past redemption's skill,
The world, the same wide den—of thieves, or what ye will.

FREEDOM

Can tyrants but by tyrants conquer'd be,
And Freedom find no champion and no child,
Such as Columbia saw arise when she
Sprung forth a Pallas, arm'd and undefiled ?
Or must such minds be nourish'd in the world,
Deep in the unpruned forest, 'midst the roar
Of cataracts, where nursing Nature smiled
On infant Washington ? Has Earth no more
Such seeds within her breast, or Europe no such shore ?

But France got drunk with blood to vomit crime,
And fatal have her Saturnalia been
To Freedom's cause, in every age and clime ;
Because the deadly days which we have seen,
And vile Ambition, that built up between
Man and his hopes an adamantine wall,
And the base pageant last upon the scene,
Are grown the pretext for the eternal thrall
Which nips life's tree, and dooms man's worst—his second fall.

Yet, Freedom ! yet thy banner, torn, but flying,
Streams like the thunder-storm *against* the wind ;
Thy trumpet voice, though broken now and dying,
The loudest still the tempest leaves behind ;

Thy tree hath lost its blossoms, and the rind,
Chopp'd by the axe, looks rough and little worth,
But the sap lasts, and still the seed we find
Sown deep, even in the bosom of the North ;
So shall a better spring less bitter fruit bring forth.

ODE TO NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE

'Tis done—but yesterday a King !
And arm'd with Kings to strive—
And now thou art a nameless thing :
So abject—yet alive !
Is this the man of thousand thrones,
Who strew'd our earth with hostile bones,
And can he thus survive ?
Since he, miscall'd the Morning Star,
Nor man nor fiend hath fallen so far.

Ill-minded man ! why scourge thy kind
Who bow'd so low the knee ?
By gazing on thyself grown blind,
Thou taught'st the rest to see.
With might unquestion'd,—power to save,—
Thine only gift hath been the grave
To those that worshipp'd thee ;
Nor till thy fall could mortals guess
Ambition's less than littleness !

Thanks for that lesson—it will teach
To after-warriors more
Than high Philosophy can preach,
And vainly preach'd before.
That spell upon the minds of men
Breaks never to unite again,
That led them to adore
Those Pagod things of sabre sway,
With fronts of brass, and feet of clay.

The triumph, and the vanity,
  The rapture of the strife—
The earthquake voice of Victory,
  To thee the breath of life ;
The sword, the sceptre, and that sway
Which man seem'd made but to obey
  Wherewith renown was rife—
All quell'd !—Dark Spirit ! what must be
The madness of thy memory !

The Desolator desolate !
  The Victor overthrown !
The Arbiter of others' fate
  A Suppliant for his own !
Is it some yet imperial hope
That with such change can calmly cope ?
  Or dread of death alone ?
To die a prince—or live a slave—
Thy choice is most ignobly brave !

He who of old would rend the oak,
  Dream'd not of the rebound ;
Chain'd by the trunk he vainly broke—
  Alone—how look'd he round ?
Thou in the sternness of thy strength
An equal deed hast done at length,
  And darker fate hast found :
He fell, the forest prowlers' prey ;
But thou must eat thy heart away !

The Roman, when his burning heart
  Was slaked with blood of Rome,
Threw down the dagger—dared depart,
  In savage grandeur, home.—
He dared depart in utter scorn
Of men that such a yoke had borne,
  Yet left him such a doom !
His only glory was that hour
Of self-upheld abandon'd power.

The Spaniard, when the lust of sway
  Had lost its quickening spell,
Cast crowns for rosaries away,
  An empire for a cell ;
A strict accountant of his beads,
A subtle disputant on creeds,
  His dotage trifled well :
Yet better had he neither known
A bigot's shrine, nor despot's throne.

But thou—from thy reluctant hand
  The thunderbolt is wrung—
Too late thou leav'st the high command
  To which thy weakness clung ;
All Evil Spirit as thou art,
It is enough to grieve the heart
  To see thine own unstrung ;
To think that God's fair world hath been
The footstool of a thing so mean ;

And Earth hath spilt her blood for him,
  Who thus can hoard his own !
And Monarchs bow'd the trembling limb,
  And thank'd him for a throne !
Fair Freedom ! we may hold thee dear,
When thus thy mightiest foes their fear
  In humblest guise have shown.
Oh ! ne'er may tyrant leave behind
A brighter name to lure mankind !

Thine evil deeds are writ in gore,
  Not written thus in vain—
Thy triumphs tell of fame no more
  Or deepen every stain :
If thou hadst died as honour dies,
Some new Napoleon might arise,
  To shame the world again—
But who would soar the solar height,
To set in such a starless night ?

Weigh'd in the balance, hero dust
Is vile as vulgar clay ;
Thy scales, Mortality ! are just
To all that pass away :
But yet methought the living great
Some higher sparks should animate,
To dazzle and dismay :
Nor deem'd Contempt could thus make mirth
Of these, the Conquerors of the earth.

And she, proud Austria's mournful flower,
Thy still imperial bride ;
How bears her breast the torturing hour ?
Still clings she to thy side ?
Must she too bend, must she too share
Thy late repentance, long despair,
Thou throneless Homicide ?
If still she loves thee, hoard that gem,
'Tis worth thy vanish'd diadem !

Then haste thee to thy sullen Isle,
And gaze upon the sea ;
That element may meet thy smile—
It ne'er was ruled by thee !
Or trace with thine all idle hand
In loitering mood upon the sand
That Earth is now as free !
That Corinth's pedagogue hath now
Transferr'd his by-word to thy brow.

Thou Timour ! in his captive's cage
What thoughts will there be thine,
While brooding in thy prison'd rage ?
But one—' The world *was* mine ! '
Unless, like he of Babylon,
All sense is with thy sceptre gone,
Life will not long confine
That spirit pour'd so widely forth—
So long obey'd—so little worth !

Or, like the thief of fire from heaven,
Wilt thou withstand the shock ?
And share with him, the unforgiven,
His vulture and his rock !
Foredoom'd by God—by man accurst,
And that last act, though not thy worst,
The very Fiend's arch mock ;
He in his fall preserved his pride,
And, if a mortal, had as proudly died !

There was a day—there was an hour,
While earth was Gaul's—Gaul thine—
When that immeasurable power
Unsated to resign
Had been an act of purer fame
Than gathers round Marengo's name
And gilded thy decline,
Through the long twilight of all time,
Despite some passing clouds of crime.

But thou forsooth must be a king,
And don the purple vest,—
As if that foolish robe could wring
Remembrance from thy breast.
Where is that faded garment ? where
The gewgaws thou wert fond to wear,
The star—the string—the crest ?
Vain froward child of empire ! say
Are all thy playthings snatch'd away ?

Where may the wearied eye repose
When gazing on the Great ;
Where neither guilty glory glows,
Nor despicable state ?
Yes—one—the first—the last—the best—
The Cincinnatus of the West,
Whom envy dared not hate,
Bequeath'd the name of Washington,
To make man blush there was but one !

TO TIME

Time ! on whose arbitrary wing
The varying hours must flag or fly,
Whose tardy winter, fleeting spring,
But drag or drive us on to die—

Hail thou ! who on my birth bestow'd
Those boons to all that know thee known ;
Yet better I sustain thy load,
For now I bear the weight alone.

I would not one fond heart should share
The bitter moments thou hast given ;
And pardon thee, since thou could'st spare
All that I loved, to peace or heaven.

To them be joy or rest, on me
Thy future ills shall press in vain :
I nothing owe but years to thee,
A debt already paid in pain.

Yet even that pain was some relief ;
It felt, but still forgot thy power :
The active agony of grief
Retards, but never counts the hour.

In joy I've sighed to think thy flight
Would soon subside from swift to slow ;
Thy cloud could overcast the light,
But could not add a night to woe ;

For then, however drear and dark,
My soul was suited to thy sky ;
One star alone shot forth a spark
To prove thee—not Eternity.

That beam hath sunk, and now thou art
A blank ; a thing to count and curse
Through each dull tedious trifling part,
Which all regret, yet all rehearse.

One scene even thou canst not deform ;
The limit of thy sloth or speed
When future wanderers bear the storm
Which we shall sleep too sound to heed ;

And I can smile to think how weak
Thine efforts shortly shall be shown.
When all the vengeance thou canst wreak
Must fall upon—a nameless stone.

VENICE

I stood in Venice, on the Bridge of Sighs ;
A palace and a prison on each hand ;
I saw from out the wave her structure rise
As from the stroke of the enchanter's wand :
A thousand years their cloudy wings expand
Around me, and a dying glory smiles
O'er the far times, when many a subject land
Look'd to the winged Lion's marble piles,
Where Venice sate in state, throned on her hundred isles !

She looks a sea Cybele, fresh from ocean,
Rising with her tiara of proud towers
At airy distance, with majestic motion,
A ruler of the waters and their powers :
And such she was ;—her daughters had their dowers
From spoils of nations, and the exhaustless East
Pour'd in her lap all gems in sparkling showers.
In purple was she robed, and of her feast
Monarchs partook, and deem'd their dignity increased.

In Venice Tasso's echoes are no more,
And silent rows the songless gondolier ;
Her palaces are crumbling to the shore,
And music meets not always now the ear :
Those days are gone—but Beauty still is here.
States fall, arts fade—but Nature doth not die,
Nor yet forget how Venice once was dear,
The pleasant place of all festivity,
The revel of the earth, the masque of Italy !

But unto us she hath a spell beyond
Her name in story, and her long array
Of mighty shadows, whose dim forms despond
Above the dogeless city's vanish'd sway ;
Ours is a trophy which will not decay
With the Rialto ; Shylock and the Moor,
And Pierre, can not be swept or worn away—
The keystones of the arch ! though all were o'er,
For us repeopled were the solitary shore.

The beings of the mind are not of clay ;
Essentially immortal, they create
And multiply in us a brighter ray
And more beloved existence : that which Fate
Prohibits to dull life, in this our state
Of mortal bondage, by these spirits supplied
First exiles, then replaces what we hate ;
Watering the heart whose early flowers have died,
And with a fresher growth replenishing the void.

Such is the refuge of our youth and age,
The first from hope, the last from vacancy ;
And this worn feeling peoples many a page,
And, may be, that which grows beneath mine eye:
Yet there are things whose strong reality
Outshines our fairy-land ; in shape and hues
More beautiful than our fantastic sky,
And the strange constellations which the Muse
O'er her wild universe is skilful to diffuse :

I saw or dream'd of such—but let them go,—
They came like truth, and disappeared like dreams ;
And whatsoe'er they were—are now but so :
I could replace them if I would ; still teems
My mind with many a form which aptly seems
Such as I sought for, and at moments found ;
Let these too go—for waking Reason deems
Such over-weening fantasies unsound,
And other voices speak, and other sights surround.

I've taught me other tongues—and in strange eyes
Have made me not a stranger ; to the mind
Which is itself, no changes bring surprise ;
Nor is it harsh to make, nor hard to find,
A country with—ay, or without mankind ;
Yet was I born where men are proud to be,
Not without cause ; and should I leave behind
The inviolate island of the sage and free,
And seek me out a home by a remoter sea ?

Perhaps I loved it well ; and should I lay
My ashes in a soil which is not mine,
My spirit shall resume it—if we may
Unbodied choose a sanctuary. I twine
My hopes of being remember'd in my line
With my land's language : if too fond and far
These aspirations in their scope incline,—
If my fame should be, as my fortunes are,
Of hasty growth and blight, and dull Oblivion bar.

My name from out the temple where the dead
Are honour'd by the nations—let it be—
And light the laurels on a loftier head !
And be the Spartan's epitaph on me—
" Sparta hath many a worthier son than he."
Meantime, I seek no sympathies, nor need ;
The thorns which I have reap'd are of the tree
I planted,—they have torn me,—and I bleed :
I should have known what fruit would spring from such a seed.

The spouseless Adriatic mourns her lord ;
And, annual marriage now no more renew'd,
The Bucentaur lies rotting unrestored,
Neglected garment of her widowhood !
St. Mark yet sees his lion where he stood,
Stand, but in mockery of his wither'd power,
Over the proud Place where an emperor sued,
And monarchs gazed and envied, in the hour
When Venice was a queen with an unequall'd dower.

The Suabian sued, and now the Austrian reigns—
An emperor tramples where an emperor knelt ;
Kingdoms are shrunk to provinces, and chains
Clank over sceptred cities ; nations melt
From power's high pinnacle, when they have felt
The sunshine for a while, and downward go
Like lauwine loosen'd from the mountain's belt :
Oh for one hour of blind old Dandolo !
The octogenarian chief, Byzantium's conquering foe.

Before St. Mark still glow his steeds of brass,
Their gilded collars glittering in the sun ;
But is not Doria's menace come to pass ?
Are they not *bridled ?*—Venice, lost and won,
Her thirteen hundred years of freedom done,
Sinks, like a sea-weed, into whence she rose !
Better be whelm'd beneath the waves, and shun,
Even in destruction's depth, her foreign foes,
From whom submission wrings an infamous repose.

In youth she was all glory,—a new Tyre,—
Her very by-word sprung from victory,
The " Planter of the Lion," which through fire
And blood she bore o'er subject earth and sea ;
Though making many slaves, herself still free,
And Europe's bulwark 'gainst the Ottomite ;
Witness Troy's rival, Candia ! Vouch it, ye
Immortal waves that saw Lepanto's fight !
For ye are names no time nor tyranny can blight.

Statues of glass—all shiver'd—the long file
Of her dead doges are declined to dust ;
But where they dwelt, the vast and sumptuous pile
Bespeaks the pageant of their splendid trust ;
Their sceptre broken, and their sword in rust,
Have yielded to the stranger : empty halls,
Thin streets, and foreign aspects, such as must
Too oft remind her who and what enthrals,
Have flung a desolate cloud o'er Venice' lovely walls.

When Athens' armies fell at Syracuse,
And fetter'd thousands bore the yoke of war,
Redemption rose up in the Attic Muse,
Her voice their only ransom from afar :
See ! as they chant the tragic hymn, the car
Of the o'ermaster'd victor stops, the reins
Fall from his hands—his idle scimitar
Starts from its belt—he rends his captive's chains,
And bids him thank the bard for freedom and his strains.

Thus, Venice, if no stronger claim were thine,
Were all thy proud historic deeds forgot,
Thy choral memory of the Bard divine,
Thy love of Tasso, should have cut the knot
Which ties thee to thy tyrants ; and thy lot
Is shameful to the nations,—most of all,
Albion ! to thee : the Ocean queen should not
Abandon Ocean's children ; in the fall
Of Venice think of thine, despite thy watery wall.

I loved her from my boyhood—she to me
Was as a fairy city of the heart,
Rising like water-columns from the sea,
Of joy the sojourn, and of wealth the mart ;
And Otway, Radcliffe, Schiller, Shakespeare's art,
Had stamp'd her image in me, and even so,
Although I found her thus, we did not part,
Perchance even dearer in her day of woe,
Than when she was a boast, a marvel, and a show.

SATIRICAL AND OCCASIONAL VERSE

WRITTEN AFTER SWIMMING FROM SESTOS TO ABYDOS

If, in the month of dark December,
Leander who was nightly wont
(What maid will not the tale remember ?)
To cross thy stream, broad Hellespont !

If, when the wintry tempest roar'd,
He sped to Hero, nothing loth,
And thus of old thy current pour'd,
Fair Venus ! how I pity both !

For *me*, degenerate modern wretch,
Though in the genial month of May,
My dripping limbs I faintly stretch,
And think I've done a feat to-day.

But since he cross'd the rapid tide,
According to the doubtful story,
To woo,—and—Lord knows what beside,
And swam for Love, as I for Glory ;

'Twere hard to say who fared the best :
Sad mortals ! thus the Gods still plague you !
He lost his labour, I my jest :
For he was drown'd, and I've the ague.

May 9, 1810.

ON LORD THURLOW'S POEMS

When Thurlow this damn'd nonsense sent
(I hope I am not violent),
Nor men nor gods knew what he meant.

And since not ev'n our Rogers' praise
To common sense his thoughts could raise—
Why *would* they let him print his lays ?

* * * * *
* * * * *

To me, divine Apollo, grant—O !
Hermilda's first and second canto,
I'm fitting up a new portmanteau ;

And thus to furnish decent lining,
My own and others' bays I'm twining—
So, gentle Thurlow, throw me thine in.

VERSICLES

I read the " Christabel ; "
Very well :
I read the " Missionary ; "
Pretty—very :
I tried at " Ilderim ; "
Ahem !
I read a sheet of " Marg'ret of *Anjou ;* "
Can you ?
I turn'd a page of Scott's " Waterloo ; "
Pooh ! pooh !
I looked at Wordsworth's milk-white " Rylstone Doe ; "
Hillo !

EPIGRAMS

Oh, Castlereagh ! thou art a patriot now ;
Cato died for his country, so didst thou :
He perish'd rather than see Rome enslaved,
Thou cutt'st thy throat that Britain may be saved !

So *He* has cut his throat at last !—He ! Who ?
The man who cut his country's long ago.

EASY WRITING, EASY READING

Oh that I had the art of easy writing
What should be easy reading ! could I scale
Parnassus, where the Muses sit inditing
Those pretty poems never known to fail,
How quickly would I print (the world delighting)
A Grecian, Syrian, or Assyrian tale ;
And sell you, mix'd with western sentimentalism,
Some samples of the finest Orientalism.

But I am but a nameless sort of person
(A broken Dandy lately on my travels)
And take for rhyme, to hook my rambling verse on,
The first that Walker's Lexicon unravels,
And when I can't find that, I put a worse on,
Not caring as I ought for critics' cavils ;
I've half a mind to tumble down to prose,
But verse is more in fashion—so here goes.

Beppo.

AUTHORS AND WOULD-BE WITS

No solemn, antique gentleman of rhyme,
Who having angled all his life for fame,
And getting but a nibble at a time,
Still fussily keeps fishing on, the same
Small " Triton of the minnows," the sublime
Of mediocrity, the furious tame,
The echo's echo, usher of the school
Of female wits, boy bards—in short, a fool !

A stalking oracle of awful phrase,
The approving " *Good !* " (by no means GOOD in law)
Humming like flies around the newest blaze,
The bluest of bluebottles you e'er saw,
Teasing with blame, excruciating with praise,
Gorging the little fame he gets all raw,
Translating tongues he knows not even by letter,
And sweating plays so middling, bad were better.

One hates an author that's *all author*, fellows
In foolscap uniforms turn'd up with ink,
So very anxious, clever, fine, and jealous,
One don't know what to say to them, or think,
Unless to puff them with a pair of bellows ;
Of coxcombry's worst coxcombs e'en the pink
Are preferable to these shreds of paper,
These unquench'd snuffings of the midnight taper.

Of these same we see several,—and of others,
Men of the world, who know the world like men,
Scott, Rogers, Moore, and all the better brothers,
Who think of something else besides the pen ;
But for the children of the " mighty mothers,"
The would-be wits and can't-be gentlemen,
I leave them to their daily " tea is ready,"
Smug coterie, and literary lady.

Beppo.

BOB SOUTHEY

Bob Southey ! You're a poet—Poet-laureate,
And representative of all the race,
Although 'tis true that you turn'd out a Tory at
Last,—yours has lately been a common case :
And now, my Epic Renegade ! what are ye at ?
With all the Lakers, in and out of place ?
A nest of tuneful persons, to my eye
Like " four-and-twenty Blackbirds in a pie ;

" Which pie being open'd they began to sing "
(This old song and new simile holds good),
" A dainty dish to set before the king,"
Or Regent, who admires such kind of food ;—
And Coleridge, too, has lately taken wing,
But like a hawk encumber'd with his hood,—
Explaining metaphysics to the nation—
I wish he would explain his Explanation.

You, Bob ! are rather insolent, you know,
  At being disappointed in your wish
To supersede all warblers here below,
  And be the only Blackbird in the dish ;
And then you overstrain yourself, or so,
  And tumble downward like the flying-fish
Gasping on deck, because you soar too high, Bob,
And fall, for lack of moisture quite a-dry, Bob !

And Wordsworth, in a rather long *Excursion*
  (I think the quarto holds five hundred pages),
Has given a sample from the vasty version
  Of his new system to perplex the sages ;
'Tis poetry—at least by his assertion,
  And may appear so when the dog-star rages—
And he who understands it would be able
To add a story to the Tower of Babel.

You—Gentlemen ! by dint of long seclusion
  From better company, have kept your own
At Keswick, and, through still continued fusion
  Of one another's minds, at last have grown
To deem, as a most logical conclusion,
  That Poesy has wreaths for you alone :
There is a narrowness in such a notion,
Which makes me wish you'd change your lakes for ocean.

Don Juan.

WHO KILL'D JOHN KEATS ?

Who kill'd John Keats ?
" I," says the Quarterly,
So savage and Tartarly ;
" 'Twas one of my feats."

Who shot the arrow ?
" The poet-priest Milman "
(So ready to kill man),
" Or Southey, or Barrow."

July, 1821.

POETICAL COMMANDMENTS

If ever I should condescend to prose,
I'll write poetical commandments, which
Shall supersede beyond all doubt all those
That went before ; in these I shall enrich
My text with many things that no one knows,
And carry precept to the highest pitch :
I'll call the work " Longinus o'er a Bottle,
Or, Every Poet his *own* Aristotle."

Thou shalt believe in Milton, Dryden, Pope ;
Thou shalt not set up Wordsworth, Coleridge, Southey ;
Because the first is crazed beyond all hope,
The second drunk, the third so quaint and mouthy :
With Crabbe it may be difficult to cope,
And Campbell's Hippocrene is somewhat drouthy :
Thou shalt not steal from Samuel Rogers, nor
Commit—flirtation with the Muse of Moore.

Thou shalt not covet Mr. Sotheby's Muse,
His Pegasus, nor any thing that's his ;
Thou shalt not bear false witness like " the Blues "—
(There's one, at least, is very fond of this) ;
Thou shalt not write, in short, but what I choose :
This is true criticism, and you may kiss,—
Exactly as you please, or not,—the rod ;
But if you don't, I'll lay it on, by G—d !

Don Juan.

ENGLAND ! WITH ALL THY FAULTS I LOVE THEE STILL

" England ! with all thy faults I love thee still,"
I said at Calais, and have not forgot it ;
I like to speak and lucubrate my fill ;
I like the government (but that is not it) ;

I like the freedom of the press and quill ;
I like the Habeas Corpus (when we've got it) ;
I like a parliamentary debate,
Particularly when 'tis not too late ;

I like the taxes, when they're not too many ;
I like a seacoal fire, when not too dear ;
I like a beef-steak, too, as well as any ;
Have no objection to a pot of beer ;
I like the weather, when it is not rainy ;
That is, I like two months of every year.
And so God save the Regent, Church, and King !
Which means that I like all and every thing.

Our standing army, and disbanded seamen,
Poor's rate, Reform, my own, the nation's debt,
Our little riots just to show we are free men,
Our trifling bankruptcies in the Gazette,
Our cloudy climate, and our chilly women,
All these I can forgive, and those forget,
And greatly venerate our recent glories,
And wish they were not owing to the Tories.

Beppo.

SHALL NOBLE ALBION PASS WITHOUT A PHRASE ?

Shall noble Albion pass without a phrase
From a bold Briton in her wonted praise ?
" Arts—arms—and George—and glory—and the isles—
And happy Britain—wealth—and Freedom's smiles—
White cliffs, that held invasion far aloof—
Contented subjects, all alike tax-proof—
Proud Wellington, with eagle beak so curl'd,
That nose, the hook where he suspends the world !
And Waterloo—and trade—and——(hush ! not yet
A syllable of imposts or of debt)——

And ne'er (enough) lamented Castlereagh,
Whose penknife slit a goose-quill t'other day—
And ' pilots who have weather'd every storm '—
(But, no, not even for rhyme's sake, name Reform.)"
These are the themes thus sung so oft before,
Methinks we need not sing them any more ;
Found in so many volumes far and near,
There's no occasion you should find them here.

The Age of Bronze.

'TWAS THE ARCHANGEL MICHAEL

'Twas the archangel Michael : all men know
The make of angels and archangels, since
There's scarce a scribbler has not one to show,
From the fiends' leader to the angels' prince.
There also are some altar-pieces, though
I really can't say that they much evince
One's inner notions of immortal spirits ;
But let the connoisseurs explain *their* merits.

Michael flew forth in glory and in good ;
A goodly work of him from whom all glory
And good arise ; the portal past—he stood ;
Before him the young cherubs and saints hoary—
(I say *young*, begging to be understood
By looks, not years ; and should be very sorry
To state they were not older than St. Peter,
But merely that they seem'd a little sweeter).

The cherubs and the saints bow'd down before
That arch-angelic hierarch, the first
Of essences angelical, who wore
The aspect of a god ; but this ne'er nursed
Pride in his heavenly bosom, in whose core
No thought, save for his Maker's service, durst
Intrude, however glorified and high ;
He knew him but the viceroy of the sky.

He and the sombre silent Spirit met—
They knew each other both for good and ill ;
Such was their power, that neither could forget
His former friend and future foe ; but still
There was a high, immortal, proud regret
In either's eye, as if 'twere less their will
Than destiny to make the eternal years
Their date of war, and their " champ-clos " the spheres.

But here they were in neutral space ; we know,
From Job, that Satan hath the power to pay
A heavenly visit thrice a-year or so ;
And that " the sons of God," like those of clay,
Must keep him company ; and we might show
From the same book, in how polite a way
The dialogue is held between the Powers
Of Good and Evil—but 'twould take up hours.

And this is not a theologic tract,
To prove, with Hebrew and with Arabic,
If Job be allegory or a fact,
But a true narrative ; and thus I pick
From out the whole but such and such an act
As sets aside the slightest thought of trick.
'Tis every title true, beyond suspicion,
And accurate as any other vision.

The spirits were in neutral space, before
The gate of heaven ; like eastern thresholds is
The place where Death's grand cause is argued o'er,
And souls despatch'd to that world or to this ;
And therefore Michael and the other wore
A civil aspect : though they did not kiss,
Yet still between his Darkness and his Brightness
There pass'd a mutual glance of great politeness.

The Archangel bow'd, not like a modern beau,
But with a graceful oriental bend,
Pressing one radiant arm just where below
The heart in good men is supposed to tend.
He turn'd as to an equal, not too low,
But kindly ; Satan met his ancient friend
With more hauteur, as might an old Castilian
Poor noble meet a mushroom rich civilian.

He merely bent his diabolic brow
An instant ; and then raising it, he stood
In act to assert his right or wrong, and show
Cause why King George by no means could or should
Make out a case to be exempt from woe
Eternal, more than other kings, endued
With better sense and hearts, whom history mentions,
Who long have " paved hell with their good intentions."

The Vision of Judgement.

" WHERE IS THE WORLD ? "

" Where is the world ? " cries Young, at *eighty*—" Where
The world in which a man was born ? " Alas !
Where is the world of *eight* years past ? *'Twas there*—
I look for it—'tis gone, a globe of glass !
Crack'd, shiver'd, vanish'd, scarcely gazed on, ere
A silent change dissolves the glittering mass.
Statesmen, chiefs, orators, queens, patriots, kings,
And dandies, all are gone on the wind's wings.

Where is Napoleon the Grand ? God knows :
Where little Castlereagh ? The devil can tell :
Where Grattan, Curran, Sheridan, all those
Who bound the bar or senate in their spell ?
Where is the unhappy Queen, with all her woes ?
And where the Daughter, whom the Isles loved well ?
Where are those martyr'd saints the Five per Cents. ?
And where—oh, where the devil are the rents ?

Where's Brummel ? Dish'd. Where's Long Pole Wellesley ?
Diddled.
Where's Whitbread ? Romilly ? Where's George the Third ?
Where is his will ? (That's not so soon unriddled.)
And where is " Fum " the Fourth, our " royal bird " ?
Gone down, it seems, to Scotland, to be fiddled
Unto by Sawney's violin, we have heard :
" Caw me, caw thee "—for six months hath been hatching
This scene of royal itch and loyal scratching.

Where is Lord This ? and where my Lady That ?
The Honourable Mistresses and Misses ?
Some laid aside like an old opera-hat,
Married, unmarried, and remarried : (this is
An evolution oft perform'd of late.)
Where are the Dublin shouts—and London hisses ?
Where are the Grenvilles ? Turn'd, as usual. Where
My friends the Whigs ? Exactly where they were.

Where are the Lady Carolines and Franceses ?
Divorced or doing thereanent. Ye annals
So brilliant, where the list of routs and dances is,—
Thou *Morning Post*, sole record of the panels
Broken in carriages, and all the fantasies
Of fashion,—say what streams now fill those channels ?
Some die, some fly, some languish on the Continent,
Because the times have hardly left them *one* tenant.

Some, who once set their caps at cautious dukes,
Have taken up at length with younger brothers :
Some heiresses have bit at sharpers' hooks :
Some maids have been made wives, some merely mothers ;
Others have lost their fresh and fairy looks :
In short, the list of alterations bothers.
There's little strange in this, but something strange is
The unusual quickness of these common changes.

Talk not of seventy years as age ; in seven
I have seen more changes, down from monarchs to
The humblest individual under heaven,
Than might suffice a moderate century through.
I knew that nought was lasting, but now even
Change grows too changeable, without being new :
Nought's permanent among the human race,
Except the Whigs *not* getting into place.

FREEDOM

When a man hath no freedom to fight for at home,
Let him combat for that of his neighbours ;
Let him think of the glories of Greece and of Rome,
And get knock'd on the head for his labours.

To do good to mankind is the chivalrous plan,
And is always as nobly requited ;
Then battle for freedom wherever you can,
And, if not shot or hang'd you'll get knighted.

THE END OF FAME

What is the end of Fame ? 'tis but to fill
A certain portion of uncertain paper :
Some liken it to climbing up a hill,
Whose summit, like all hills, is lost in vapour ;
For this men write, speak, preach, and heroes kill,
And bards burn what they call their " midnight taper."
To have, when the original is dust,
A name, a wretched picture, and worse bust.

What are the hopes of man ? Old Egypt's King
Cheops erected the first pyramid
And largest, thinking it was just the thing
To keep his memory whole, and mummy hid ;

But somebody or other rummaging,
Burglariously broke his coffin's lid :
Let not a monument give you or me hopes,
Since not a pinch of dust remains of Cheops.

But I, being fond of true philosophy,
Say very often to myself, " Alas !
All things that have been born were born to die,
And flesh (which Death mows down to hay) is grass ;
You've pass'd your youth not so unpleasantly,
And if you had it o'er again—'t would pass—
So thank your stars that matters are no worse,
And read your Bible, sir, and mind your purse."

But for the present, gentle reader ! and
Still gentler purchaser ! the bard—that's I—
Must, with permission, shake you by the hand,
And so your humble servant, and good-b'ye !
We meet again, if we should understand
Each other ; and if not, I shall not try
Your patience further than by this short sample—
'Twere well if others follow'd my example !

" Go, little book, from this my solitude !
I cast thee on the waters—go thy ways !
And if, as I believe, thy vein be good,
The world will find thee after many days."
When Southey's read, and Wordsworth understood,
I can't help putting in my claim to praise—
The four first rhymes are Southey's every line :
For God's sake, reader ! take them not for mine.

Don Juan.

LINES INSCRIBED UPON A CUP FORMED FROM A SKULL

Start not—nor deem my spirit fled :
In me behold the only skull
From which, unlike a living head,
Whatever flows is never dull.

I lived, I loved, I quaff'd, like thee ;
I died : let earth my bones resign :
Fill up—thou canst not injure me ;
The worm hath fouler lips than thine.

Better to hold the sparkling grape,
Than nurse the earth-worm's slimy brood ;
And circle in the goblet's shape
The drink of gods, than reptiles' food.

Where once my wit, perchance, hath shone,
In aid of others' let me shine ;
And when, alas ! our brains are gone,
What nobler substitute than wine ?

Quaff while thou canst : another race,
When thou and thine, like me, are sped,
May rescue thee from earth's embrace,
And rhyme and revel with the dead.

Why no—since through life's little day
Our heads such sad effects produce ?
Redeem'd from worms and wasting clay,
This chance is theirs, to be of use.

NEWSTEAD ABBEY, 1808.

THE BANQUET AND PETER PITH

'Twas a great banquet, such as Albion old
Was wont to boast—as if a glutton's tray
Were something very glorious to behold.
But 'twas a public feast and public day,—
Quite full, right dull, guests hot, and dishes cold,
Great plenty, much formality, small cheer,
And every body out of their own sphere.

The squires familiarly formal, and
My lords and ladies proudly condescending ;
The very servants puzzling how to hand
Their plates—without it might be too much bending
From their high places by the sideboard's stand—
Yet, like their masters, fearful of offending.
For any deviation from the graces
Might cost both men and masters too—their *places*.

There were some hunters bold, and coursers keen,
Whose hounds ne'er err'd, nor greyhounds deign'd to lurch ;
Some deadly shots too, Septembrizers, seen
Earliest to rise, and last to quit the search
Of the poor partridge through his stubble screen.
There were some massy members of the church,
Takers of tithes, and makes of good matches,
And several who sung fewer psalms than catches.

There were some country wags too—and, alas !
Some exiles from the town, who had been driven
To gaze, instead of pavement, upon grass,
And rise at nine in lieu of long eleven.
And lo ! upon that day it came to pass,
I sate next that o'erwhelming son of heaven,
The very powerful parson, Peter Pith,
The loudest wit I e'er was deafen'd with.

I knew him in his livelier London days,
A brilliant diner-out, though but a curate ;
And not a joke he cut but earn'd its praise,
Until preferment, coming at a sure rate,
(O Providence ! how wondrous are thy ways !
Who would suppose thy gifts sometimes obdurate ?)
Gave him, to lay the devil who looks o'er Lincoln,
A fat fen vicarage, and nought to think on.

His jokes were sermons, and his sermons jokes ;
But both were thrown away amongst the fens ;
For wit hath no great friend in aguish folks.
No longer ready ears and short-hand pens
Imbibed the gay *bon mot*, or happy hoax :
The poor priest was reduced to common sense,
Or to coarse efforts, very loud and long,
To hammer a hoarse laugh from the thick throng.

Don Juan.

EPISTLE TO MR. MURRAY

My dear Mr. Murray,
You're in a damn'd hurry
To set up this ultimate Canto ;
But (if they don't rob us)
You'll see Mr. Hobhouse
Will bring it safe in his portmanteau.

For the Journal you hint of,
As ready to print off,
No doubt you do right to commend it ;
But as yet I have writ off
The devil a bit of
Our " Beppo : "—when copied, I'll send it.

Then you've ***'s Tour,—
No great things, to be sure,—
You could hardly begin with a less work ;
For the pompous rascallion,
Who don't speak Italian
Nor French, must have scribbled by guess-work.

You can make any loss up
With " Spence " and his gossip,
A work which must surely succeed ;
Then Queen Mary's Epistlecraft,
With the new " Fytte " of " Whistlecraft,"
Must make people purchase and read.

Then you've General Gordon,
Who girded his sword on,
To serve with a Muscovite master,
And help him to polish
A nation so owlish,
They thought shaving their beards a disaster.

For the man, " poor and shrewd,"
With whom you'd conclude
A compact without more delay,
Perhaps some such pen is
Still extant in Venice ;
But please, sir, to mention *your pay*.

VENICE, *January* 1818.

ODE TO MR. MURRAY.

Strahan, Tonson, Lintot of the times,
Patron and publisher of rhymes,
For thee the bard up Pindus climbs,
My Murray.

To thee, with hope and terror dumb,
The unfledged MS. authors come ;
Thou printest all—and sellest some—
My Murray.

Upon thy table's baize so green
The last new Quarterly is seen,—
But where is thy new Magazine,
My Murray ?

Along thy sprucest bookshelves shine
The works thou deemest most divine—
The " Art of Cookery," and mine,
My Murray.

Tours, Travels, Essays, too, I wist,
And Sermons to thy mill bring gist ;
And then thou hast the " Navy List,"
My Murray.

And Heaven forbid I should conclude
Without " the Board of Longitude,"
Although this narrow paper would,
My Murray.

VENICE, *March* 25, 1818.

THE LONDON ROAD

Through coaches, drays, choked turnpikes, and a whirl
Of wheels, and roar of voices, and confusion ;
Here taverns wooing to a pint of " purl,"
There mails fast flying off like a delusion ;
There barbers' blocks with periwigs in curl
In windows ; here the lamplighter's infusion
Slowly distill'd into the glimmering glass
(For in those days we had not got to gas—) ;

Through this, and much, and more, is the approach
Of travellers to mighty Babylon :
Whether they come by horse, or chaise, or coach,
With slight exceptions, all the ways seem one.
I could say more, but do not choose to encroach
Upon the guide-book's privilege. The sun
Had set some time, and night was on the ridge
Of twilight, as the party cross'd the bridge.

That's rather fine, the gentle sound of Thamis—
Who vindicates a moment, too, his stream—
Though hardly heard through multifarious " damme's."
The lamps of Westminster's more regular gleam,
The breadth of pavement, and yon shrine where fame is
A spectral resident—whose pallid beam
In shape of moonshine hovers o'er the pile—
Make this a sacred part of Albion's isle.

The Druids' groves are gone—so much the better :
Stone-Henge is not—but what the devil is it ?—
But Bedlam still exists with its safe fetter,
That madmen may not bite you on a visit ;
The Bench too seats or suits full many a debtor ;
The Mansion House too (though some people quiz it)
To me appears a stiff yet grand erection ;
But then the Abbey's worth the whole collection.

The line of lights too up to Charing Cross,
Pall Mall, and so forth, have a coruscation
Like gold as in comparison to dross,
Match'd with the Continent's illumination,
Whose cities Night by no means deigns to gloss,
The French were not yet a lamp-lighting nation,
And when they grew so—on their new-found lantern,
Instead of wicks, they made a wicked man turn.

A row of gentlemen along the streets
Suspended may illuminate mankind,
As also bonfires made of country-seats ;
But the old way is best for the purblind ;
The other looks like phosphorus on sheets,
A sort of ignis-fatuus to the mind,
Which, though 'tis certain to perplex and frighten,
Must burn more mildly ere it can enlighten.

But London's so well lit, that if Diogenes
Could recommence to hunt his *honest man*,
And found him not amidst the various progenies
Of this enormous city's spreading spawn,
'T were for want of lamps to aid his dodging his
Yet undiscover'd treasure. What *I* can,
I've done to find the same throughout life's journey,
But see the world is only one attorney.

Don Juan.

ON BOARD THE LISBON PACKET

Huzza ! Hodgson, we are going,
Our embargo's off at last;
Favourable breezes blowing
Bend the canvas o'er the mast.
From aloft the signal's streaming,
Hark ! the farewell gun is fired ;
Women screeching, tars blaspheming,
Tell us that our time's expired.
Here's a rascal
Come to task all,
Prying from the custom-house ;
Trunks unpacking,
Cases cracking,
Not a corner for a mouse
'Scapes unsearch'd amid the racket,
Ere we sail on board the Packet.

Now our boatmen quit their mooring,
And all hands must ply the oar ;
Baggage from the quay is lowering,
We're impatient—push from shore.
" Have a care ! that case holds liquor—
Stop the boat—I'm sick—oh Lord ! "
" Sick, ma'am, damme, you'll be sicker
Ere you've been an hour on board."
Thus are screaming
Men and women,
Gemmen, ladies, servants, Jacks ;
Here entangling,
All are wrangling,
Stuck together close as wax.—
Such the general noise and racket,
Ere we reach the Lisbon Packet.

Now we've reach'd her, lo ! the captain,
Gallant Kidd, commands the crew ;
Passengers their berths are clapt in,
Some to grumble, some to spew.
" Hey day ! call you that a cabin ?
Why 'tis hardly three feet square ;
Not enough to stow Queen Mab in—
Who the deuce can harbour there ? "
" Who, sir ? plenty—
Nobles twenty
Did at once my vessel fill."—
" Did they ? Jesus,
How you squeeze us !
Would to God they did so still :
Then I'd 'scape the heat and racket
Of the good ship, Lisbon Packet."

Fletcher ! Murray ! Bob ! where are you ?
Stretch'd along the decks like logs—
Bear a hand, you jolly tar, you !
Here's a rope's end for the dogs.
Hobhouse muttering fearful curses,
As the hatchway down he rolls,
Now his breakfast, now his verses,
Vomits forth—and damns our souls.
" Here's a stanza
On Braganza—
Help ! "—" A couplet ? "—" No, a cup
Of warm water—"
" What's the matter ? "
" Zounds ! my liver's coming up ;
I shall not survive the racket
Of this brutal Lisbon Packet."

Now at length we're off for Turkey,
Lord knows when we shall come back !
Breezes foul and tempests murky
May unship us in a crack.

But, since life at most a jest is,
As philosophers allow,
Still to laugh by far the best is,
Then laugh on—as I do now.
Laugh at all things.
Great and small things,
Sick or well, at sea or shore ;
While we're quaffing,
Let's have laughing—
Who the devil cares for more ?—
Some good wine ! and who would lack it,
Ev'n on board the Lisbon Packet ?

FALMOUTH ROAD, *June* 30, 1809.

FAREWELL TO MALTA

Adieu, ye joys of La Valette !
Adieu, sirocco, sun, and sweat !
Adieu, thou palace rarely enter'd !
Adieu, ye mansions where—I've ventured !
Adieu, ye cursed streets of stairs !
(How surely he who mounts you swears !)
Adieu, ye merchants often failing !
Adieu, thou mob for ever railing !
Adieu, ye packets—without letters !
Adieu, ye fools—who ape your betters !
Adieu, thou damned'st quarantine,
That gave me fever, and the spleen !
Adieu that stage which makes us yawn, Sirs,
Adieu his Excellency's dancers !
Adieu to Peter—whom no fault's in,
But could not teach a colonel waltzing ;
Adieu, ye females fraught with graces !
Adieu red coats, and redder faces !
Adieu the supercilious air
Of all that strut " en militaire ! "

I go—but God knows when, or why,
To smoky towns and cloudy sky,
To things (the honest truth to say)
As bad—but in a different way.—

Farewell to these, but not adieu,
Triumphant sons of truest blue !
While either Adriatic shore,
And fallen chiefs, and fleets no more,
And nightly smiles, and daily dinners,
Proclaim you war and women's winners.
Pardon my Muse, who apt to prate is,
And take my rhyme—because 'tis " gratis."

And now I've got to Mrs. Fraser,
Perhaps you think I mean to praise her—
And were I vain enough to think
My praise was worth this drop of ink,
A line—or two—were no hard matter,
As here, indeed, I need not flatter :
But she must be content to shine
In better praises than in mine,
With lively air, and open heart
And fashion's ease, without its art ;
Her hours can gaily glide along,
Nor ask the aid of idle song.—

And now, O Malta ! since thou'st got us,
Thou little military hothouse !
I'll not offend with words uncivil,
And wish thee rudely at the Devil,
But only stare from out my casement,
And ask, for what is such a place meant ?
Then, in my solitary nook,
Return to scribbling, or a book,

Or take my physic while I'm able
(Two spoonfuls hourly by the label),
Prefer my nightcap to my beaver,
And bless the gods—I've got a fever !

May 26, 1811.

TO TOM LITTLE

What are you doing now,
Oh Thomas Moore ?
What are you doing now,
Oh Thomas Moore ?
Sighing or suing now,
Rhyming or wooing now,
Billing or cooing now,
Which, Thomas Moore ?

But the Carnival's coming,
Oh Thomas Moore !
The Carnival's coming,
Oh Thomas Moore !
Masking and humming,
Fifing and drumming,
Guitarring and strumming,
Oh Thomas Moore !

TO TOM LITTLE

WRITTEN THE EVENING BEFORE HIS VISIT TO MR. LEIGH HUNT IN COLD BATH FIELDS PRISON, MAY 19, 1813.

Oh you, who in all names can tickle the town,
Anacreon, Tom Little, Tom Moore, or Tom Brown,—
For hang me if I know of which you may most brag,
Your Quarto two-pounds, or your Twopenny Post Bag ;

* * * * * * *

But now to my letter—to *yours* 'tis an answer—
To-morrow be with me, as soon as you can, sir,
All ready and dress'd for proceeding to spunge on
(According to compact) the wit in the dungeon—
Pray Phœbus at length our political malice
May not get us lodgings within the same palace !
I suppose that to-night you're engaged with some codgers,
And for Sotheby's Blues have deserted Sam Rogers ;
And I, though with cold I have nearly my death got,
Must put on my breeches, and wait on the Heathcote,
But to-morrow, at four, we will both play the *Scurra*,
And you'll be Catullus, the Regent Mamurra.

FRAGMENT OF AN EPISTLE TO TOM MOORE

" What say *I?* "—not a syllable further in prose ;
I'm your man " of all measures," dear Tom,—so, here goes !
Here goes, for a swim on the stream of old Time,
On those buoyant supporters, the bladders of rhyme.
If our weight breaks them down, and we sink in the flood,
We are smother'd, at least, in respectable mud,
Where the Divers of Bathos lie drown'd in a heap,
And Southey's last Pæan has pillow'd his sleep ;—
That " Felo de se " who, half drunk with his malmsey,
Walk'd out of his depth and was lost in a calm sea,
Singing " Glory to God " in a spick and span stanza,
The like (since Tom Sternhold was choked) never man saw.

The papers have told you, no doubt, of the fusses,
The fetes, and the gapings to get at these Russes,—
Of his Majesty's suite, up from coachman to Hetman,—
And what dignity decks the flat face of the great man.
I saw him, last week, at two balls and a party,—
For a prince, his demeanour was rather too hearty.
You know, *we* are used to quite different graces,

* * * * * * *

The Czar's look, I own, was much brighter and brisker,
But then he is sadly deficient in whisker ;
And wore but a starless blue coat, and in kersey-
-mere breeches whisk'd round, in a waltz with the Jersey,
Who, lovely as ever, seem'd just as delighted
With majesty's presence as those she invited.

June 1814.

* * * * * * *

BYRON'S FAREWELL

"ON THIS DAY I COMPLETE MY THIRTY-SIXTH YEAR"

'Tis time this heart should be unmoved,
Since others it hath ceased to move :
Yet, though I cannot be beloved,
Still let me love !

My days are in the yellow leaf ;
The flowers and fruits of love are gone ;
The worm, the canker, and the grief
Are mine alone !

The fire that on my bosom preys
Is lone as some volcanic isle ;
No torch is kindled at its blaze—
A funeral pile—

The hope, the fear, the jealous care,
The exalted portion of the pain
And power of love, I cannot share,
But wear the chain.

But 'tis not *thus*—and 'tis not *here*—
Such thoughts should shake my soul, nor *now*,
Where glory decks the hero's bier,
Or binds his brow.

The sword, the banner, and the field,
Glory and Greece, around me see !
The Spartan, borne upon his shield,
Was not more free.

Awake ! (not Greece—she *is* awake !)
Awake, my spirit ! Think through *whom*
Thy life-blood tracks its parent lake,
And then strike home !

Tread those reviving passions down,
Unworthy manhood !—unto thee
Indifferent should the smile or frown
Of beauty be.

If thou regret'st thy youth, *why live ?*
The land of honourable death
Is here :—up to the field, and give
Away thy breath !

Seek out—less often sought than found—
A soldier's grave, for thee the best ;
Then look around, and choose thy ground,
And take thy rest.

MISSOLONGHI, *Jan.* 22, 1824.

LETTERS

LETTERS

At Cambridge

To Elizabeth B. Pigot

June 11th, 1807.

Dear Queen Bess,

Savage ought to be *immortal :*—though not a *thoroughbred bull-dog*, he is the finest puppy I ever *saw*, and will answer much better ; in his great and manifold kindness he has already bitten my fingers, and disturbed the *gravity* of old Boatswain, who is *grievously discomposed*. I wish to be informed what he *costs*, his *expenses*, &c. &c., that I may indemnify Mr. G——. My thanks are *all* I can give for the trouble he has taken, make a *long speech*, and conclude it with 1 2 3 4 5 6 7.[1] I am out of practice, so *deputize* you as Legate,—*ambassador* would not do in a matter concerning the *Pope*, which I presume this must, as the *whole* turns upon a *Bull*.

Yours,
Byron.

P.S.—I write in bed.

At Cambridge

To Elizabeth B. Pigot

Trin. Coll. Camb., *July 5th*, 1807.

Since my last letter I have determined to reside *another year* at Granta, as my rooms, &c. &c., are finished in great style, several old friends come up again, and many new acquaintances made ; consequently my inclination leads me

[1] He here alludes to an odd fancy or trick of his own ;—whenever he was at a loss for something to say, he used always to gabble over "1 2 3 4 5 6 7."

forward, and I shall return to college in October, if still *alive*. My life here has been one continued routine of dissipation—out at different places every day, engaged to more dinners, &c. &c., than my *stay* would permit me to fulfil. At this moment I write with a bottle of claret in my *head* and *tears* in my *eyes ;* for I have just parted with my " *Cornelian*," who spent the evening with me. As it was our last interview, I postponed my engagement to devote the hours of the *Sabbath* to friendship : —Edleston and I have separated for the present, and my mind is a chaos of hope and sorrow. To-morrow I set out for London : you will address your answer to " Gordon's Hotel, Albemarle-street," where I *sojourn* during my visit to the metropolis.

I rejoice to hear you are interested in my *protégé :* he has been my *almost constant* associate since October, 1805, when I entered Trinity College. His *voice* first attracted my attention, his *countenance* fixed it, and his *manners* attached me to him for ever. He departs for a *mercantile house* in *town* in October, and we shall probably not meet till the expiration of my minority, when I shall leave to his decision either entering as a *partner* through my interest, or residing with me altogether. Of course he would in his present frame of mind prefer the *latter*, but he may alter his opinion previous to that period ; —however, he shall have his choice. I certainly love him more than any human being, and neither time nor distance have had the least effect on my (in general) changeable disposition. In short, we shall put *Lady E. Butler* and *Miss Ponsonby* to the blush, *Pylades* and *Orestes* out of countenance, and want nothing but a catastrophe like *Nisus* and *Euryalus*, to give *Jonathan* and *David* the " go by." He certainly is perhaps more attached to *me* than even I am in return. During the whole of my residence at Cambridge we met every day, summer and winter, without passing *one* tiresome moment, and separated each time with increasing reluctance. I hope you will one day see us together ; he is the only being I esteem, though I *like* many.

The Marquis of Tavistock was down the other day ; I

supped with him at his tutor's—entirely a whig party. The opposition muster strong here now, and Lord Huntingdon, the Duke of Leinster, &c. &c., are to join us in October, so every thing will be *splendid*. The *music* is all over at present. Met with another "*accidency*"—upset a butter-boat in the lap of a lady—look'd very *blue*—*spectators* grinned—"curse 'em!" Apropos, sorry to say, been *drunk* every day, and not quite *sober* yet—however, touch no meat, nothing but fish, soup, and vegetables, consequently it does me no harm—sad dogs all the *Cantabs*. Mem.—*we mean* to reform next January. This place is a *monotony of endless variety*—like it—hate Southwell. Has Ridge sold well? or do the ancients demur? What ladies have bought?

* * * * * *

Saw a girl at St. Mary's the image of Anne * *, thought it was her—all in the wrong—the lady stared, so did I—I *blushed*, so did *not* the lady—sad thing—wish women had *more modesty*. Talking of women puts me in mind of my terrier Fanny—how is she? Got a headache, must go to bed, up early in the morning to travel. My protégé breakfasts with me; parting spoils my appetite—excepting from Southwell. Mem. *I hate Southwell*. Yours, &c.

In London

To Miss Pigot

London, *August 11th*, 1807.

On Sunday next I set off for the Highlands. A friend of mine accompanies me in my carriage to Edinburgh. There we shall leave it, and proceed in a *tandem* (a species of open carriage) through the western passes to Inverary, where we shall purchase *shelties*, to enable us to view places inaccessible to *vehicular conveyances*. On the coast we shall hire a vessel and visit the most remarkable of the Hebrides, and, if we have time and favourable weather, mean to sail as far as Iceland, only 300 miles from the northern extremity of Caledonia, to peep at *Hecla*. This last intention you will keep a secret,

as my nice *mamma* would imagine I was on a Voyage of *Discovery*, and raise the accustomed *maternal warwhoop*.

Last week I swam in the Thames from Lambeth through the 2 bridges, Westminster and Blackfriars, a distance, including the different turns and tacks made on the way, of 3 miles ! You see I am in excellent training in case of a *squall* at sea. I mean to collect all the Erse traditions, poems, &c. &c., and translate, or expand the subject to fill a volume, which may appear next spring under the denomination of " *The Highland Harp*," or some title equally *picturesque*.

In London

To his Mother

8 St. James's-street, *March 6th*, 1809.

Dear Mother,

My last letter was written under great depression of spirits from poor Falkland's death, who has left without a shilling four children and his wife. I have been endeavouring to assist them, which, God knows, I cannot do as I could wish, from my own enbarrassments and the many claims upon me from other quarters.

What you say is all very true : come what may, *Newstead* and I *stand* or fall together. I have now lived on the spot, I have fixed my heart upon it, and no pressure, present or future, shall induce me to barter the last vestige of our inheritance. I have that pride within me which will enable me to support difficulties. I can endure privations ; but could I obtain in exchange for Newstead Abbey the first fortune in the country, I would reject the proposition. Set your mind at ease on that score ; Mr. H** talks like a man of business on the subject, I feel like a man of honour, and I will not sell Newstead.

I shall get my seat on the return of the affidavits from Carhais, in Cornwall, and will do something in the House soon : I must dash, or it is all over. My Satire must be kept secret for a month ; after that you may say what you please on the subject.

Lord C. has used me infamously, and refused to state any particulars of my family to the Chancellor. I have *lashed* him in my rhymes, and perhaps his lordship may regret not being more conciliatory. They tell me it will have a sale ; I hope so, for the bookseller has behaved well, as far as publishing well goes.

P.S.—You shall have a mortgage on one of the farms.

At Falmouth

To Francis Hodgson

June 25th, 1809.

Before this reaches you, Hobhouse, two officers' wives, three children, two waiting-maids, ditto subalterns for the troops, three Portuguese esquires and domestics, in all nineteen souls, will have sailed in the Lisbon packet, with the noble Captain Kidd, a gallant commander as ever smuggled an anker of right Nantz.

We are going to Lisbon first, because the Malta packet has sailed, d'ye see ?—from Lisbon to Gibraltar, Malta, Constantinople, and " all that," as Orator Henley said, when he put the church, and " all that," in danger.

This town of Falmouth, as you will partly conjecture, is no great ways from the sea. It is defended on the sea-side by tway castles, St. Maws and Pendennis, extremely well calculated for annoying every body except an enemy. St. Maws is garrisoned by an able-bodied person of fourscore, a widower. He has the whole command and sole management of six most unmanageable pieces of ordnance, admirably adapted for the destruction of Pendennis, a like tower of strength on the opposite side of the Channel. We have seen St. Maws, but Pendennis they will not let us behold, save at a distance, because Hobhouse and I are suspected of having already taken St. Maws by a coup-de-main.

The town contains many quakers and salt-fish—the oysters have a taste of copper, owing to the soil of a mining country—

the women (blessed be the corporation therefore !) are flogged at the cart's tail when they pick and steal, as happened to one of the fair sex yesterday noon. She was pertinacious in her behaviour, and damned the mayor. * *

Hodgson ! remember me to the Drury, and remember me to—yourself, when drunk :—I am not worth a sober thought—Look to my Satire at Cawthorn's, Cockspur-street. * * *

I don't know when I can write again, because it depends on that experienced navigator, Captain Kidd, and the " stormy winds that (don't) blow " at this season. I leave England without regret—I shall return to it without pleasure. I am like Adam, the first convict sentenced to transportation, but I have no Eve, and have eaten no apple but what was sour as a crab ;—and thus ends my first chapter. Adieu.

In this letter the lively verses were enclosed which begin :—

Huzza ! Hodgson, we are going,
Our embargo's off at last ;
Favourable breezes blowing
Bend the canvas o'er the mast.[1]

At Lisbon

To Francis Hodgson

July 16th, 1809.

Thus far have we pursued our route, and seen all sorts of marvellous sights, palaces, convents, &c.—which, being to be heard in my friend Hobhouse's forthcoming Book of Travels, I shall not anticipate by smuggling any account whatsoever to you in a private and clandestine manner. I must just observe that the village of Cintra in Estremadura is the most beautiful, perhaps, in the world. * * *

I am very happy here, because I loves oranges, and talk bad Latin to the monks, who understand it, as it is like their own,—and I goes into Society (with my pocket-pistols), and I swims in the Tagus all across at once, and I rides on an ass or a mule, and swears Portuguese, and have got a diarrhœa and bites from

[1] See p. 134 for the rest of the poem.

the musquitoes. But what of that? Comfort must not be expected by folks that go a-pleasuring. * * *

When the Portuguese are pertinacious, I say, "Carracho!"—the great oath of the grandees, that very well supplies the place of "Damme,"—and when dissatisfied with my neighbour, I pronounce him "Ambra di merdo." With these two phrases, and a third, "Avra Bouro," which signifieth "Get an ass," I am universally understood to be a person of degree and a master of languages. How merrily we lives that travellers be!—if we had food and raiment. But, in sober sadness, any thing is better than England, and I am infinitely amused with my pilgrimage as far as it has gone.

To-morrow we start to ride post near 400 miles as far as Gibraltar, where we embark for Melita and Byzantium. A letter to Malta will find me, or to be forwarded, if I am absent. Pray embrace the Drury and Dwyer, and all the Ephesians you encounter. I am writing with Butler's donative pencil, which makes my bad hand worse. Excuse illegibility. * * *

Hodgson! send me the news, and the deaths and defeats, and capital crimes and the misfortnues of one's friends; and let us hear of literary matters, and the controversies and the criticisms. All this will be pleasant—"Suave mari magno," &c. Talking of that, I have been sea-sick, and sick of the sea. Adieu.

In Albania

To his Mother

Prevesa, *November 12th*, 1809.

My dear Mother,

I have now been some time in Turkey: this place is on the coast, but I have traversed the interior of the province of Albania, on a visit to the Pacha. I left Malta in the Spider, a brig of war, on the 21st of September, and arrived in eight days at Prevesa. * * * In nine days [more] I reached Tepaleen. Our journey was much prolonged by the torrents that had fallen from the mountains, and intersected the roads. I shall never forget the singular scene on entering Tepaleen at five

in the afternoon, as the sun was going down. It brought to my mind (with some change of *dress*, however) Scott's description of Branksome Castle in his *Lay*, and the feudal system. The Albanians, in their dresses (the most magnificent in the world, consisting of a long *white kilt*, gold-worked cloak, crimson-velvet gold-laced jacket and waistcoat, silver mounted pistols and daggers), the Tartars with their high caps, the Turks in their vast pelisses and turbans, the soldiers and black slaves with the horses, the former in groups in an immense large open gallery in front of the palace, the latter placed in a kind of cloister below it, two hundred steeds ready caparisoned to move in a moment, couriers entering or passing out with dispatches, the kettle-drums beating, boys calling the hour from the minaret of the mosque, altogether, with the singular appearance of the building itself, formed a new and delightful spectacle to a stranger. I was conducted to a very handsome apartment, and my health inquired after by the vizier's secretary, " a-la-mode Turque ! "

The next day I was introduced to Ali Pacha. I was dressed in a full suit of staff uniform, with a very magnificent sabre, &c. The vizier received me in a large room paved with marble ; a fountain was playing in the centre ; the apartment was surrounded by scarlet ottomans. He received me standing, a wonderful compliment from a Mussulman, and made me sit down on his right hand. I have a Greek interpreter for general use, but a physician of Ali's, named Femlario, who understands Latin, acted for me on this occasion. His first question was, why, at so early an age, I left my country ?— (the Turks have no idea of travelling for amusement.) He then said, the English minister, Captain Leake, had told him I was of a great family, and desired his respects to my mother ; which I now, in the name of Ali Pacha, present to you. He said he was certain I was a man of birth, because I had small ears, curling hair, and little white hands, and expressed himself pleased with my appearance and garb. He told me to consider him as a father whilst I was in Turkey, and said he looked on me as his son. Indeed, he treated me like a child,

sending me almonds and sugared sherbet, fruit and sweetmeats, twenty times a-day. He begged me to visit him often, and at night, when he was at leisure. I then, after coffee and pipes, retired for the first time. I saw him thrice afterwards. It is singular, that the Turks, who have no hereditary dignities, and few great families, except the Sultans, pay so much respect to birth; for I found my pedigree more regarded than my title.

* * * * * *

I am going to-morrow, with a guard of fifty men, to Patras in the Morea, and thence to Athens, where I shall winter. Two days ago I was nearly lost in a Turkish ship of war, owing to the ignorance of the captain and crew, though the storm was not violent. Fletcher yelled after his wife, the Greeks called on all the saints, the Mussulmans on Alla; the captain burst into tears and ran below deck, telling us to call on God; the sails were split, the main-yard shivered, the wind blowing fresh, the night setting in, and all our chance was to make Corfu, which is in possession of the French, or (as Fletcher pathetically termed it) "a watery grave." I did what I could to console Fletcher; but finding him incorrigible, wrapped myself up in my Albanian capote (an immense cloak), and lay down on deck to wait the worst. I have learnt to philosophize in my travels, and if I had not, complaint was useless. Luckily the wind abated, and only drove us on the coast of Suli, on the main land, where we landed, and proceeded, by the help of the natives, to Prevesa again; but I shall not trust Turkish sailors in future, though the Pacha had ordered one of his own galliots to take me to Patras. I am therefore going as far as Missolonghi by land, and there have only to cross a small gulf to get to Patras.

Fletcher's next epistle will be full of marvels: we were one night lost for nine hours in the mountains in a thunder-storm, and since nearly wrecked. In both cases, Fletcher was sorely bewildered, from apprehensions of famine and banditti in the first, and drowning in the second instance. His eyes were a little hurt by the lightning, or crying (I don't know which), but are now recovered.

In the Morea

To Francis Hodgson

Patras, Morea, *October 3rd*, 1810.

As I have just escaped from a physician and a fever, which confined me five days to bed, you won't expect much "allegrezza" in the ensuing letter. In this place there is an indigenous distemper, which, when the wind blows from the Gulf of Corinth (as it does five months out of six), attacks great and small, and makes woeful work with visitors. Here be also two physicians, one of whom trusts to his genius (never having studied)—the other to a campaign of eighteen months against the sick of Otranto, which he made in his youth with great effect.

When I was seized with my disorder, I protested against both these assassins;—but what can a helpless, feverish, toasted-and-watered poor wretch do? In spite of my teeth and tongue, the English consul, my Tartar, Albanians, dragoman, forced a physician upon me, and in three days vomited and glystered me to the last gasp. In this state I made my epitaph—take it.

> Youth, Nature, and relenting Jove,
> To keep my lamp *in* strongly strove;
> But Romanelli was so stout,
> He beat all three—and blew it *out*.

But Nature and Jove, being piqued at my doubts, did, in fact, at last, beat Romanelli, and here I am, well but weakly, at your service.

As for England, it is long since I have heard from it. Every one at all connected with my concerns is asleep, and you are my only correspondent, agents excepted. I have really no friends in the world; though all my old school-companions are gone forth into that world, and walk about there in monstrous disguises, in the garb of guardsmen, lawyers, parsons, fine gentlemen, and such other masquerade dresses. So I here shake hands and cut with all these busy people, none of whom write to me. Indeed, I asked it not;—and here I am, a poor

traveller, and heathenish philosopher, who hath perambulated the greatest part of the Levant, and seen a great quantity of very improvable land and sea, and, after all, am no better than when I set out—Lord help me!

At Sea

To R. C. Dallas

Volage Frigate, *June 28th*, 1811.

After two years' absence (to a day, on the 2d of July, before which we shall not arrive at Portsmouth), I am retracing my way to England.

* * * * * *

I am coming back with little prospect of pleasure at home, and with a body a little shaken by one or two smart fevers, but a spirit I hope yet unbroken. My affairs, it seems, are considerably involved, and much business must be done with lawyers, colliers, farmers, and creditors. Now this, to a man who hates bustle as he hates a bishop, is a serious concern. But enough of my home department.

* * * * * *

My Satire, it seems, is in a fourth edition, a success rather above the middling run, but not much for a production which, from its topics, must be temporary, and of course be successful at first, or not at all. At this period, when I can think and act more coolly, I regret that I have written it, though I shall probably find it forgotten by all except those whom it has offended.

Yours and Pratt's *protégé*, Blackett, the cobbler, is dead, in spite of his rhymes, and is probably one of the instances where death has saved a man from damnation. You were the ruin of that poor fellow amongst you; had it not been for his patrons, he might now have been in a very good plight, shoe- (not verse-) making; but you have made him immortal with a vengeance. I write this, supposing poetry, patronage, and strong waters to have been the death of him. If you are in

town in or about the beginning of July, you will find me at Dorant's, in Albemarle-street, glad to see you. I have an imitation of Horace's Art of Poetry ready for Cawthorn, but don't let that deter you, for I shan't inflict it upon you. You know I never read my rhymes to visitors. I shall quit town in a few days for Notts., and thence to Rochdale.

AT NEWSTEAD ABBEY

To Scrope Davies

August 7th, 1811.

Some curse hangs over me and mine. My mother lies a corpse in this house : one of my best friends is drowned in a ditch. What can I say or think, or do ? I received a letter from him the day before yesterday. My dear Scrope, if you can spare a moment, do come down to me ; I want a friend. Matthews's last letter was written on *Friday*,—on Saturday he was not. In ability, who was like Matthews ? How did we all shrink before him ? You do me but justice in saying, I would have risked my paltry existence to have preserved him. This very evening did I mean to write, inviting him, as I invite you, my very dear friend, to visit me. God forgive * * * for his apathy ! What will our poor Hobhouse feel ! His letters breathe but of Matthews. Come to me, Scrope ; I am almost desolate—left almost alone in the world—I had but you, and H. and M., and let me enjoy the survivors whilst I can. Poor M., in his letter of Friday, speaks of his intended contest for Cambridge, and a speedy journey to London. Write or come, but come if you can, or one or both.

AT NEWSTEAD ABBEY

To R. C. Dallas

August 12th, 1811.

Peace be with the dead ! Regret cannot wake them. With a sigh to the departed, let us resume the dull business of life, in the certainty that we also shall have our repose. Besides her who gave me being, I have lost more than one who made that being tolerable.—The best friend of my friend Hobhouse,

Matthews, a man of the first talents, and also not the worst of my narrow circle, has perished miserably in the muddy waves of the Cam, always fatal to genius :—my poor schoolfellow, Wingfield, at Coimbra—within a month ; and whilst I had heard from *all three*, but not seen *one*. Matthews wrote to me the very day before his death ; and though I feel for his fate, I am still more anxious for Hobhouse, who, I very much fear, will hardly retain his senses ; his letters to me since the event have been most incoherent. But let this pass—we shall all one day pass along with the rest—the world is too full of such things, and our very sorrow is selfish.

In London

To Tom Moore

June 22nd, 1813.

Yesterday I dined in company with " Stael, the Epicene," whose politics are sadly changed. She is for the Lord of Israel and the Lord of Liverpool—a vile antithesis of a Methodist and a Tory—talks of nothing but devotion and the ministry, and, I presume, expects that God and the government will help her to a pension.

* * * * * *

Murray, the *ἀναξ* of publishers, the Anac of stationers, has a design upon you in the paper line. He wants you to become the staple and stipendiary Editor of a periodical work. What say you ? Will you be bound, like " Kit Smart, to write for ninety-nine years in the Universal Visitor ? " Seriously, he talks of hundreds a year—and, though I hate prating of the beggarly elements—his proposal may be to your honour and profit, and, I am very sure, will be to our pleasure.

I don't know what to say about " friendship." I never was in friendship but once, in my nineteenth year, and then it gave me as much trouble as love. I am afraid, as Whitbread's sire said to the king, when he wanted to knight him, that I am " too old : " but, nevertheless, no one wishes you more friends, fame, and felicity.

In London

To Tom Moore

October 2nd, 1813.

You have not answered some six letters of mine. This, therefore, is my penultimate. I will write to you once more, but, after that—I swear by all the saints—I am silent and supercilious. I have met Curran at Holland-house—he beats every body ;—his imagination is beyond human, and his humour (it is difficult to define what is wit) perfect. Then he has fifty faces, and twice as many voices, when he mimics ;—I never met his equal. Now, were I a woman, and eke a virgin, that is the man I would make my Scamander. He is quite fascinating. Remember, I have met him but once ; and you, who have known him long, may probably deduct from my panegyric. I almost fear to meet him again, lest the impression should be lowered. He talked a great deal about you—a theme never tiresome to me, nor any body else that I know. What a variety of expression he conjures into that naturally not very fine countenance of his ! He absolutely changes it entirely. I have done—for I can't describe him, and you know him. On Sunday I return to * *, where I shall not be far from you. Perhaps I shall hear from you in the mean time. Good night.

Saturday morn.—Your letter has cancelled all my anxieties. I did *not suspect* you in *earnest*. Modest again ! Because I don't do a very shabby thing, it seems, " I don't fear your competition." If it were reduced to an alternative of preference, I *should* dread you, as much as Satan does Michael. But is there not room enough in our respective regions ? Go on—it will soon be my turn to forgive. To-day I dine with Mackintosh and Mrs. *Stale*—as John Bull may be pleased to denominate Corinne—whom I saw last night, at Covent-garden, yawning over the humour of Falstaff.

The reputation of " gloom," if one's friends are not included in the *reputants*, is of great service ; as it saves one from a legion of impertinents, in the shape of common-place acquaint-

ance. But thou know'st I can be a right merry and conceited fellow, and rarely "larmoyant."

At Newstead Abbey

To John Murray

January 22nd, 1814.

You will be glad to hear of my safe arrival here. The time of my return will depend upon the weather, which is so impracticable that this letter has to advance through more snows than ever opposed the emperor's retreat. The roads are impassable, and return impossible for the present; which I do not regret, as I am much at my ease, and *six-and-twenty* complete this day—a very pretty age, if it would always last. Our coals are excellent, our fireplaces large, my cellar full, and my head empty; and I have not yet recovered my joy at leaving London. If any unexpected turn occurred with my purchasers, I believe I should hardly quit the place at all; but shut my door, and let my beard grow.

The books I have brought with me are a great consolation for the confinement, and I bought more as we came along. In short, I never consult the thermometer, and shall not put up prayers for a *thaw*, unless I thought it would sweep away the rascally invaders of France. Was ever such a thing as Blücher's proclamation?

Just before I left town, Kemble paid me the compliment of desiring me to write a *tragedy;* I wish I could, but I find my scribbling mood subsiding—not before it was time; but it is lucky to check it at all. If I lengthen my letter, you will think it is coming on again; so, good bye.

In London

To Tom Moore

2 Albany, *April 9th*, 1814.

I am but just returned to town, from which you may infer that I have been out of it; and I have been boxing, for exercise,

with Jackson for this last month daily. I have also been drinking,—and, on one occasion, with three other friends at the Cocoa Tree, from six till four, yea, unto five in the matin. We clareted and champagned till two—then supped, and finished with a kind of regency punch composed of madeira, brandy, and *green* tea, no *real* water being admitted therein. There was a night for you !—without once quitting the table, except to ambulate home, which I did alone, and in utter contempt of a hackney-coach and my own *vis*, both of which were deemed necessary for our conveyance. And so,—I am very well, and they say it will hurt my constitution.

I have also, more or less, been breaking a few of the favourite commandments ; but I mean to pull up and marry,—if any one will have me. In the mean time, the other day I nearly killed myself with a collar of brawn, which I swallowed for supper, and *in*-digested for I don't know how long ;—but that is by the by. All this gourmandise was in honour of Lent ; for I am forbidden meat all the rest of the year,—but it is strictly enjoined me during your solemn fast. I have been, and am, in very tolerable love :—but of that hereafter, as it may be.

My dear Moore, say what you will in your Preface, and quiz any thing, or anybody,—me, if you like it. Oons ! dost thou think me of the *old*, or rather *elderly*, school ? If one can't jest with one's friends, with whom can we be facetious ? You have nothing to fear from * *, whom I have not seen, being out of town when he called. He will be very correct, smooth, and all that, but I doubt whether there will be any " grace beyond the reach of art ; "—and, whether there is or not, how long will you be so d—d modest ? As for Jeffrey, it is a very handsome thing of him to speak well of an old antagonist, —and what a mean mind dared not do. Any one will revoke praise ; but—were it not partly my own case—I should say that very few have strength of mind to unsay their censure, or follow it up with praise of other things.

AT NEWSTEAD ABBEY

To Tom Moore

September 20th, 1814.

Here's to her who long
Hath waked the poet's sigh!
The girl who gave to song
What gold could never buy.

My dear Moore, I am going to be married—that is I am accepted, and one usually hopes the rest will follow. My mother of the Gracchi (that *are* to be) *you* think too strait-laced for me, although the paragon of only children, and invested with "golden opinions of all sorts of men," and full of "most blest conditions" as Desdemona herself. Miss Milbanke is the lady, and I have her father's invitation to proceed there in my elect capacity,—which, however, I cannot do till I have settled some business in London, and got a blue coat.

She is said to be an heiress, but of that I really know nothing certainly, and shall not inquire. But I do know, that she has talents and excellent qualities, and you will not deny her judgment, after having refused six suitors and taken me.

Now, if you have any thing to say against this, pray do; my mind's made up, positively fixed, determined, and therefore I will listen to reason, because now it can do no harm. Things may occur to break it off, but I will hope not. In the mean time, I tell you (a *secret*, by the by,—at least, till I know she wishes it to be public), that I have proposed and am accepted. You need not be in a hurry to wish me joy, for one mayn't be married for months. I am going to town to-morrow; but expect to be here, on my way there, within a fortnight.

If this had not happened, I should have gone to Italy. In my way down, perhaps, you will meet me at Nottingham, and come over with me here. I need not say that nothing will give me greater pleasure. I must, of course, reform thoroughly; and, seriously, if I can contribute to her happiness, I shall secure my own. She is so good a person, that—that—in short, I wish I was a better.

Canine Recollections

To Tom Moore

January 19th, 1815.

To your question about the "dog"—Umph!—my "mother," I won't say any thing against—that is, about her; but how long a "mistress" or friend may recollect paramours or competitors (lust and thirst being the two great and only bonds between the amatory or the amicable), I can't say,—or, rather, you know as well as I could tell you. But as for canine recollections, as far as I could judge by a cur of mine own (always bating Boatswain, the dearest and, alas! the maddest of dogs), I had one (half a *wolf* by the she side) that doted on me at ten years old, and very nearly ate me at twenty. When I thought he was going to enact Argus, he bit away the backside of my breeches, and never would consent to any kind of recognition, despite of all kinds of bones which I offered him. So, let Southey blush and Homer too, as far as I can decide upon quadruped memories.

I humbly take it, the mother knows the son that pays her ointure—a mistress her mate, till he * * and refuses salary—a friend his fellow, till he loses cash and character, and a dog his master, till he changes him.

So, you want to know about milady and me? But let me not, as Roderick Random says, "profane the chaste mysteries of Hymen"—damn the word, I had nearly spelt it with a small *h*. I like Bell as well as you do (or did, you villain!) Bessy—and that is (or was) saying a great deal.

Address your next to Seaham, Stockton-on-Tees, where we are going on Saturday (a bore, by the way) to see father-in-law, Sir Jacob, and my lady's lady-mother.

At Seaham: A Sad Song

To Tom Moore

March 2nd, 1815.

My dear Thom,

I feel merry enough to send you a sad song.[1] You once

[1] The verses inclosed were those melancholy ones, "There's not a joy the world can give like those it takes away." (See p. 12, where it appears among the lyrics.)

asked me for some words which you would set. Now you may set or not, as you like,—but there they are, in a legible hand,[1] and not in mine, but of my own scribbling ; so you may say of them what you please. Why don't you write to me ? I shall make you " a speech " if you don't respond quickly.

I am in such a state of sameness and stagnation, and so totally occupied in consuming the fruits—and sauntering—and playing dull games at cards—and yawning—and trying to read old Annual Registers and the daily papers—and gathering shells on the shore—and watching the growth of stunted gooseberry bushes in the garden—that I have neither time nor sense to say more than

Yours ever,

B.

In London : Sheridan

To Tom Moore

Terrace, Piccadilly, *October 31st*, 1815.

Yesterday, I dined out with a largeish party, where were Sheridan and Colman, Harry Harris of C. G., and his brother, Sir Gilbert Heathcote, Dr. Kinnaird, and others, of note and notoriety. Like other parties of the kind, it was first silent, then talky, then argumentative, then disputatious, then unintelligible, then altogethery, then inarticulate, and then drunk. When we had reached the last step of this glorious ladder, it was difficult to get down again without stumbling ;—and, to crown all, Kinnaird and I had to conduct Sheridan down a d—d corkscrew staircase, which had certainly been constructed before the discovery of fermented liquors, and to which no legs, however crooked, could possibly accommodate themselves. We deposited him safe at home, where his man, evidently used to the business, waited to receive him in the hall.

Both he and Colman were, as usual, very good ; but I carried away much wine, and the wine had previously carried away my memory ; so that all was hiccup and happiness for the last hour or so, and I am not impregnated with any of the

[1] The MS. was in the handwriting of Lady Byron.

conversation. Perhaps you heard of a late answer of Sheridan to the watchman who found him bereft of that " divine particle of air," called reason. * * * * * * * He, the watchman, found Sherry in the street, fuddled and bewildered, and almost insensible. " Who are *you*, sir ? "—no answer. " What's your name ? "—a hiccup. " What's your name ? "—Answer, in a slow, deliberate, and impassive tone—" Wilberforce ! ! ! " Is not that Sherry all over ?—and, to my mind, excellent. Poor fellow, *his* very dregs are better than the " first sprightly runnings " of others.

My paper is full, and I have a grievous headache.

P.S.—Lady B. is in full progress. Next month will bring to light (with the aid of " Juno Lucina, *fer opem*," or rather *opes*, for the last are most wanted), the tenth wonder of the world—Gil Blas being the eighth, and he (my son's father) the ninth.

At Ouchy, near Lausanne

To John Murray

June 27th, 1816.

I am thus far (kept by stress of weather) on my way back to Diodati (near Geneva), from a voyage in my boat round the Lake ; and I enclose you a sprig of *Gibbon's acacia* and some rose-leaves from his garden, which, with part of his house, I have just seen. You will find honourable mention, in his Life, made of this " acacia," when he walked out on the night of concluding his history. The garden and *summer-house*, where he composed, are neglected, and the last utterly decayed ; but they still show it as his " cabinet " and seem perfectly aware of his memory.

My route, through Flanders, and by the Rhine, to Switzerland, was all I expected and more.

I have traversed all Rousseau's ground with the Heloise before me, and am struck to a degree that I cannot express with the force and accuracy of his descriptions, and the beauty of their reality. Meillerie, Clarens, and Vevay, and the Château

de Chillon, are places of which I shall say little, because all I could say must fall short of the impressions they stamp.

Three days ago, we were most nearly wrecked in a squall off Meillerie, and driven to shore. I ran no risk, being so near the rocks, and a good swimmer; but our party were wet, and incommoded a good deal. The wind was strong enough to blow down some trees, as we found at landing; however, all is righted and right, and we are thus far on our return.

Dr. Polidori is not here, but at Diodati, left behind in hospital with a sprained ankle, which he acquired in tumbling from a wall—he can't jump.

I shall be glad to hear you are well, and have received for me certain helms and swords, sent from Waterloo, which I rode over with pain and pleasure.

I have finished a third Canto of Childe Harold (consisting of one hundred and seventeen stanzas), longer than either of the two former, and in some parts, it may be, better; but of course on that I cannot determine. I shall send it by the first safe-looking opportunity.

At Diodati

To John Murray

September 30th, 1816.

To-morrow I dine at Copet. Saturday I strike tents for Italy. This evening, on the lake in my boat with Mr. Hobhouse, the pole which sustains the mainsail slipped in tacking, and struck me so violently on one of my legs (the *worst*, luckily) as to make me do a foolish thing, viz. to *faint*—a downright swoon; the thing must have jarred some nerve or other, for the bone is not injured, and hardly painful (it is six hours since), and cost Mr. Hobhouse some apprehension and much sprinkling of water to recover me. The sensation was a very odd one: I never had but two such before, once from a cut on the head from a stone, several years ago, and once (long ago also) in falling into a great wreath of snow;—a sort of gray giddiness first, then nothingness, and a total loss of memory on beginning to recover. The last part is not disagreeable, if one did not find it again.

At Milan

To John Murray

October 15th, 1816.

I wrote to you, on my way here, a short note, dated Martigny. Mr. Hobhouse and myself arrived here a few days ago, by the Simplon and Laggo Maggiore route. Of course we visited the Borromean Islands, which are fine, but too artificial. The Simplon is magnificent in its nature and its art,—both God and men have done wonders,—to say nothing of the devil, who must certainly have had a hand (or a hoof) in some of the rocks and ravines through and over which the works are carried.

Milan is striking, the cathedral superb. The city altogether reminds me of Seville, but a little inferior. We had heard divers bruits, and took precautions on the road, near the frontier, against some " many worthy fellows (*i.e.* felons) that were out," and had ransacked some preceding travellers, a few weeks ago, near Sesto,—or *C*esto, I forget which,—of cash and raiment, besides putting them in bodily fear, and lodging about twenty slugs in the retreating part of a courier belonging to Mr. Hope. But we were not molested, and, I do not think, in any danger, except of making mistakes in the way of cocking and priming whenever we saw an old house, or an ill-looking thicket, and now and then suspecting the " true men," who have very much the appearance of the thieves of other countries. What the thieves may look like, I know not, nor desire to know, for it seems they come upon you in bodies of thirty (" in buckram and Kendal green ") at a time, so that the voyagers have no great chance. It is something like poor dear Turkey in that respect, but not so good, for there you can have as great a body of rogues to match the regular banditti ; but here the gens d'armes are said to be no great things, and as for one's own people, one can't carry them about like Robinson Crusoe with a gun on each shoulder.

I have been to the Ambrosian library—it is a fine collection—

full of MSS. edited and unedited. I enclose you a list of the former recently published ; these are matters for your literati. For me, in my simple way, I have been most delighted with a correspondence of letters, all original and amatory, between *Lucretia Borgia* and *Cardinal Bembo*, preserved there. I have pored over them and a lock of her hair, the prettiest and fairest imaginable—I never saw fairer—and shall go repeatedly to read the epistles over and over ; and if I can obtain some of the hair by fair means, I shall try. I have already persuaded the librarian to promise me copies of the letters, and I hope he will not disappoint me. They are short, but very simple, sweet, and to the purpose ; there are some copies of verses in Spanish also by her ; the tress of her hair is long, and, as I said before, beautiful. The Brera gallery of paintings has some fine pictures, but nothing of a collection. Of painting I know nothing ; but I like a Guercino—a picture of Abraham putting away Hagar and Ishmael—which seems to me natural and goodly. The Flemish school, such as I saw it in Flanders, I utterly detested, despised, and abhorred ; it might be painting, but it was not nature ; the Italian is pleasing and their *ideal* very noble.

The Italians I have encountered here are very intelligent and agreeable. In a few days I am to meet Monti. By the way, I have just heard an anecdote of Beccaria, who published such admirable things against the punishment of death. As soon as his book was out, his servant (having read it, I presume), stole his watch ; and his master, while correcting the press of a second edition, did all he could to have him hanged by way of advertisement.

I forgot to mention the triumphal arch begun by Napoleon, as a gate to this city. It is unfinished, but the part completed worthy of another age and the same country. The society here is very oddly carried on,—at the theatre and the theatre only,—which answers to our opera. People meet there as at a rout, but in very small circles. From Milan I shall go to Venice. If you write, write to Geneva, as before—the letter will be forwarded.

At Verona

To Tom Moore

November 6th, 1816.

My dear Moore,

Your letter, written before my departure from England, and addressed to me in London, only reached me recently. Since that period, I have been over a portion of that part of Europe which I had not already seen. About a month since, I crossed the Alps from Switzerland to Milan, which I left a few days ago, and am thus far on my way to Venice, where I shall probably winter. Yesterday I was on the shores of the Benacus, with his *fluctibus et fremitu*. Catullus's Sirmium has still its name and site, and is remembered for his sake ; but the very heavy autumnal rains and mists prevented our quitting our route (that is, Hobhouse and myself, who are at present voyaging together), as it was better not to see it at all than to a great disadvantage.

I found on the Benacu the same tradition of a city still visible in calm weather below the waters, which you have preserved of Lough Neagh, " When the clear, cold eve's declining." I do not know that it is authorised by records ; but they tell you such a story, and say that the city was swallowed up by an earthquake. We moved to-day over the frontier to Verona, by a road suspected of thieves—" the wise *convey* it call,"—but without molestation. I shall remain here a day or two to gape at the usual marvels—amphitheatre, paintings, and all that time-tax of travel—though Catullus, Claudian, and Shakepeare have done more for Verona than it ever did for itself. They still pretend to show, I believe, the " tomb of all the Capulets "—we shall see.

Among many things at Milan, one pleased me particularly, viz., the correspondence (in the prettiest love-letters in the world) of Lucretia Borgia with Cardinal Bembo (who, *you say*, made a very good cardinal), and a lock of her hair, and some Spanish verses of hers,—the lock very fair and beautiful—I took one single hair of it as a relic, and wished sorely to get

a copy of one or two of the letters ; but it is prohibited : *that* I don't mind ; but it was impracticable ; and so I only got some of them by heart. They are kept in the Ambrosian Library, which I often visited to look them over—to the scandal of the librarian, who wanted to enlighten me with sundry valuable MSS., classical, philosophical, and pious. But I stick to the Pope's daughter, and wish myself a cardinal.

I have seen the finest parts of Switzerland, the Rhine, the Rhone, and the Swiss and Italian lakes ; for the beauties of which I refer you to the Guide-book. The north of Italy is tolerably free from the English ; but the south swarms with them, I am told. Madame de Staël I saw frequently at Copet, which she renders remarkably pleasant. She has been particularly kind to me. I was for some months her neighbour, in a country-house called Diodati, which I had on the Lake of Geneva.

My health is very endurable, except that I am subject to casual giddiness and faintnesses, which is so like a fine lady, that I am rather ashamed of the disorder. When I sailed, I had a physician with me,[1] whom, after some months of patience, I found it expedient to part with, before I left Geneva some time. On arriving at Milan, I found this gentleman in very good society, where he prospered for some weeks ; but, at length, at the theatre he quarrelled with an Austrian officer, and was sent out by the government in twenty-four hours. I was not present at his squabble ; but, on hearing that he was put under arrest, I went and got him out of his confinement, but could not prevent his being sent off, which, indeed, he partly deserved, being quite in the wrong, and having begun a row for row's sake. I had preceded the Austrian government some weeks myself, in giving him his congé from Geneva. He is not a bad fellow, but very young and hot-headed, and more likely to incur diseases than to cure them. Hobhouse and myself found it useless to intercede for him. This happened some time before we left Milan. He is gone to Florence. * * *

[1] Dr. Polidori.

At Venice

To Tom Moore

November 17th, 1816.

I wrote to you from Verona the other day in my progress hither, which letter I hope you will receive. Some three years ago, or it may be more, I recollect your telling me that you had received a letter from our friend Sam, dated "On board his gondola." *My* gondola is, at this present, waiting for me on the canal; but I prefer writing to you in the house, it being autumn—and rather an English autumn than otherwise. It is my intention to remain at Venice during the winter, probably, as it has always been (next to the East) the greenest island of my imagination. It has not disappointed me; though its evident decay would, perhaps, have that effect upon others. But I have been familiar with ruins too long to dislike desolation. Besides, I have fallen in love, which, next to falling into the canal (which would be of no use, as I can swim), is the best or the worst thing I could do. I have got some extremely good apartments in the house of a "Merchant of Venice," who is a good deal occupied with business, and has a wife in her twenty-second year. Marianna (that is her name) is in her appearance altogether like an antelope. She has the large, black, oriental eyes, with that peculiar expression in them which is seen rarely among *Europeans*—even the Italians—and which many of the Turkish women give themselves by tinging the eyelid,—an art not known out of that country, I believe. This expression she has *naturally*,—and something more than this. In short, I cannot describe the effect of this kind of eye,—at least upon me. Her features are regular, and rather aquiline—mouth small—skin clear and soft, with a kind of hectic colour—forehead remarkably good: her hair is of the dark gloss, curl, and colour of Lady J**'s: her figure is light and pretty, and she is a famous songstress—scientifically so: her natural voice (in conversation, I mean) is very sweet; and the naïveté of the Venetian dialect is always pleasing in the mouth of a woman.

At Venice

To Tom Moore

March 25th, 1817.

I have been very ill with a slow fever, which at last took to flying, and became as quick as need be. But, at length, after a week of half delirium, burning skin, thirst, hot headache, horrible pulsation, and no sleep, by the blessing of barley water, and refusing to see any physician, I recovered. It is an epidemic of the place, which is annual, and visits strangers. Here follow some versicles, which I made one sleepless night.

I read the " Christabel ; "
Very well :
I read the " Missionary ; "
Pretty—very :
I tried at " Ilderim ; "
Ahem !
I read a sheet of " Marg'ret of *Anjou ;* "
Can you ?
I turn'd a page of " * *'s Waterloo ; "
Pooh ! pooh !
I look'd at Wordsworth's milk-white " Rylstone Doe : "
Hillo !
&c. &c. &c.

I am still in love,—which is a dreadful draw-back in quitting a place, and I can't stay at Venice much longer. What I shall do on this point I don't know. The girl means to go with me, but I do not like this for her own sake. I have had so many conflicts in my own mind on this subject, that I am not at all sure they did not help me to the fever I mentioned above. I am certainly very much attached to her, and I have cause to be so, if you knew all. But she has a child ; and though, like all the " children of the sun," she consults nothing but passion, it is necessary I should think for both ; and it is only the virtuous, like * * * *, who can afford to give up husband and child, and live happy ever after.

The Italian ethics are the most singular ever met with. The perversion, not only of action, but of reasoning, is singular in the women. It is not that they do not consider the thing itself

as wrong, and very wrong, but *love* (the *sentiment* of love) is not merely an excuse for it, but makes it an *actual virtue*, provided it is disinterested, and not a *caprice*, and is confined to one object. They have awful notions of constancy ; for I have seen some ancient figures of eighty pointed out as Amorosi of forty, fifty, and sixty years' standing. I can't say I have ever seen a husband and wife so coupled.

P.S.—Marianna, to whom I have just translated what I have written on our subject to you, says—" If you loved me thoroughly, you would not make so many fine reflections, which are only good *forbirsi i scarpi*,"—that is, " to clean shoes withal,"—a Venetian proverb of appreciation, which is applicable to reasoning of all kinds.

At Venice

To John Murray

May 30th, 1817.

* * * * * *

The day before I left Rome I saw three robbers guillotined. The ceremony—including the *masqued* priests ; the half-naked executioners ; the bandaged criminals ; the black Christ and his banner ; the scaffold ; the soldiery ; the slow procession, and the quick rattle and heavy fall of the axe ; the splash of the blood, and the ghastliness of the exposed heads—is altogether more impressive than the vulgar and ungentlemanly dirty " new drop " and dog-like agony of infliction upon the sufferers of the English sentence. Two of these men behaved calmly enough, but the first of the three died with great terror and reluctance. What was very horrible, he would not lie down ; then his neck was too large for the aperture, and the priest was obliged to drown his exclamations by still louder exhortations. The head was off before the eye could trace the blow ; but from an attempt to draw back the head, notwithstanding it was held forward by the hair, the first head was cut off close to the ears ; the other two were taken off more cleanly. It is better than the oriental way, and (I

should think) than the axe of our ancestors. The pain seems little, and yet the effect to the spectator, and the preparation to the criminal, is very striking and chilling. The first turned me quite hot and thirsty, and made me shake so that I could hardly hold the opera-glass (I was close, but was determined to see, as one should see every thing, once, with attention); the second and third (which shows how dreadfully soon things grow indifferent), I am ashamed to say, had no effect on me as a horror, though I would have saved them if I could.

At La Mira, Venice

To Tom Moore

July 10*th*, 1817.

Murray, the Mokanna of booksellers, has contrived to send me extracts from Lalla Rookh by the post. They are taken from some magazine, and contain a short outline and quotations from the two first Poems. I am very much delighted with what is before me, and very thirsty for the rest. You have caught the colours as if you had been in the rainbow, and the tone of the East is perfectly preserved; so that * * * and its author must be somewhat in the back-ground, and learn that it requires something more than to have been upon the hunch of a dromedary to compose a good oriental story. I am glad you have changed the title from "Persian Tale." * *

I suspect you have written a devilish fine composition, and I rejoice in it from my heart; because "the Douglas and the Percy both together are confident against a world in arms." I hope you won't be affronted at my looking on us as "birds of a feather;" though on whatever subject you had written, I should have been very happy in your success.

There is a simile of an orange tree's "flowers and fruits," which I should have liked better, if I did not believe it to be a reflection on * * *

Do you remember Thurlow's poem to Sam—"*When* Roger;" and that d—d supper of Rancliffe's that ought to have been a

dinner? "Ah, Master Shallow, we have heard the chimes at midnight."—But

> My boat is on the shore,
> And my bark is on the sea:
> But, before I go, Tom Moore,
> Here's a double health to thee!

At Venice

To Samuel Rogers

March 3rd, 1818.

I have not, as you say, "taken to wife the Adriatic." I heard of Moore's loss from himself in a letter which was delayed upon the road three months. I was sincerely sorry for it, but in such cases what are words?

The villa you speak of is one at Este, which Mr. Hoppner (Consul-general here) has transferred to me. I have taken it for two years as a place of Villeggiatura. The situation is very beautiful indeed, among the Euganean hills, and the house very fair. The vines are luxuriant to a great degree, and all the fruits of the earth abundant. It is close to the old castle of the Estes, or Guelphs, and within a few miles of Arqua, which I have visited twice, and hope to visit often.

Last summer (except an excursion to Rome) I passed upon the Brenta. In Venice I winter, transporting my horses to the Lido, bordering the Adriatic (where the fort is), so that I get a gallop of some miles daily along the strip of beach which reaches to Malamocco, when in health; but within these few weeks I have been unwell. At present I am getting better. The Carnival was short, but a good one. I don't go out much, except during the time of masques; but there are one or two conversazioni, where I go regularly, just to keep up the system; as I had letters to their givers; and they are particular on such points; and now and then, though very rarely, to the Governor's.

It is a very good place for women. I like the dialect and their manner very much. There is a *naïveté* about them which is

very winning, and the romance of the place is a mighty adjunct; the *bel sangue* is not, however, now amongst the *dame* or higher orders; but all under *i fazzioli*, or kerchiefs (a white kind of veil which the lower orders wear upon their heads);—the *vesta zendale*, or old national female costume is no more. The city, however, is decaying daily, and does not gain in population. However, I prefer it to any other in Italy; and here have I pitched my staff, and here do I purpose to reside for the remainder of my life, unless events, connected with business not to be transacted out of England, compel me to return for that purpose; otherwise I have few regrets, and no desires to visit it again for its own sake.

At Venice

To Tom Moore

March 16th, 1818.

Since my last, which I hope that you have received, I have had a letter from our friend Samuel. He talks of Italy this summer—won't you come with him? I don't know whether you would like our Italian way of life or not * * * * * *

* * * * * *

They are an odd people. The other day I was telling a girl, "you must not come to-morrow, because Marguerita is coming at such a time,"—(they are both about five feet ten inches high, with great black eyes and fine figures—fit to breed gladiators from—and I had some difficulty to prevent a battle upon a rencontre once before),—"unless you promise to be friends, and"—the answer was an interruption, by a declaration of war against the other, which she said would be a "Guerra di Candia." Is it not odd that the lower order of Venetians should still allude proverbially to that famous contest, so glorious and so fatal to the Republic?

They have singular expressions, like all the Italians. For example, "Viscere"—as we would say, "my love," or "my heart," as an expression of tenderness. Also, "I would go for you into the midst of a hundred *knives*."—"*Mazza ben*,"

excessive attachment,—literally, "I wish you well even to killing." Then they say (instead of our way, "do you think I would do you so much harm?") "do you think I would *assassinate* you in such a manner?"—"Tempo *perfido*," bad weather; "Strade *perfide*," bad roads—with a thousand other allusions and metaphors, taken from the state of society and habits in the middle ages.

I am not so sure about *mazza*, whether it don't mean *massa*, *i.e.* a great deal, a *mass*, instead of the interpretation I have given it. But of the other phrases I am sure.

Three o' th' clock—I must "to bed, to bed, to bed," as mother S * * (that tragical friend of the mathematical * * *) says. * *

* * * * * *

Have you ever seen—I forget what or whom—no matter. They tell me Lady Melbourne is very unwell. I shall be so sorry. She was my greatest *friend*, of the feminine gender:—when I say "friend" I mean *not* mistress, for that's the antipode. Tell me all about you and every body—how Sam is—how you like your neighbours, the Marquis and Marchesa, &c.

At Ravenna

The Fornarina: Margarita Cogni

To John Murray

August 1st, 1819.

Since you desire the story of Margarita Cogni, you shall be told it, though it may be lengthy.

Her face is the fine Venetian cast of the old time; her figure, though perhaps too tall, is not less fine—and taken altogether in the national dress.

In the summer of 1817, * * * * and myself were sauntering on horseback along the Brenta one evening, when, amongst a group of peasants, we remarked two girls as the prettiest we had seen for some time. About this period, there had been great distress in the country, and I had a little relieved some of the people. Generosity makes a great figure at very little cost in Venetian livres, and mine had probably been exaggerated

as an Englishman's. Whether they remarked us looking at them or no, I know not ; but one of them called out to me in Venetian, " Why do not you, who relieve others, think of us also ? " I turned round and answered her—" Cara, tu sei troppo bella e giovane per aver' bisogna del' soccorso mio." She answered, " If you saw my hut and my food, you would not say so." All this passed half jestingly, and I saw no more of her for some days.

A few evenings after, we met with these two girls again, and they addressed us more seriously, assuring us of the truth of their statement. They were cousins ; Margarita married, the other single. As I doubted still of the circumstances, I took the business in a different light, and made an appointment with them for the next evening * * * * * * * In short, in a few evenings we arranged our affairs, and for a long space of time she was the only one who preserved over me an ascendancy which was often disputed, and never impaired.

The reasons of this were, firstly, her person :—very dark, tall, the Venetian face, very fine black eyes. She was two-and-twenty years old, * * * * * * * * She was besides a thorough Venetian in her dialect, in her thoughts, in her countenance, in every thing, with all their *naïveté* and pantaloon humour. Besides, she could neither read nor write, and could not plague me with letters,—except twice that she paid sixpence to a public scribe, under the piazza, to make a letter for her, upon some occasion when I was ill and could not see her. In other respects, she was somewhat fierce and *prepotente*, that is overbearing, and used to walk in whenever it suited her, with no very great regard to time, place, nor persons ; and if she found any women in her way, she knocked them down.

When I first knew her, I was in *relazione* (liaison) with la Signora * *, who was silly enough one evening at Dolo, accompanied by some of her female friends, to threaten her ; for the gossips of the Villeggiatura had already found out, by the neighing of my horse one evening, that I used to " ride late

in the night" to meet the Fornarina. Margarita threw back her veil (*fazziolo*), and replied in very explicit Venetian: "*You* are *not* his *wife*: *I* am *not* his *wife*: you are his Donna, and *I* am his *Donna*: your husband is a *becco*, and mine is another. For the rest, what *right* have you to reproach me? If he prefers me to you, is it my fault? If you wish to secure him, tie him to your petticoat-string.—But do not think to speak to me without a reply, because you happen to be richer than I am." Having delivered this pretty piece of eloquence (which I translate as it was related to me by a bystander), she went on her way, leaving a numerous audience, with Madame * *, to ponder at her leisure on the dialogue between them.

When I came to Venice for the winter, she followed; and as she found herself out to be a favourite, she came to me pretty often. But she had inordinate self-love, and was not tolerant of other women. At the "Cavalchina," the masqued ball on the last night of the Carnival, where all the world goes, she snatched off the mask of Madame Contarini, a lady noble by birth, and decent in conduct, for no other reason but because she happened to be leaning on my arm. You may suppose what a cursed noise this made; but this is only one of her pranks.

At last she quarrelled with her husband, and one evening ran away to my house. I told her this would not do: she said she would lie in the street, but not go back to him; that he beat her, (the gentle tigress!) spent her money, and scandalously neglected her. As it was midnight, I let her stay, and next day, there was no moving her at all. Her husband came, roaring and crying, and entreating her to come back:—*not* she! He then applied to the police, and they applied to me: I told them and her husband to *take* her; I did not want her; she had come, and I could not fling her out of the window; but they might conduct her through that or the door if they chose it. She went before the commissary, but was obliged to return with that "becco ettico," as she called the poor man, who had a phthisic. In a few days she ran away again. After a precious piece of work, she fixed herself in my house, really and truly without my

consent ; but, owing to my indolence, and not being able to keep my countenance—for if I began in a rage, she always finished by making me laugh with some Venetian pantaloonery or another ; and the gipsy knew this well enough, as well as her other powers of persuasion, and exerted them with the usual tact and success of all she-things ;—high and low, they are all alike for that.

Madame Benzoni also took her under her protection, and then her head turned. She was always in extremes, either crying or laughing, and so fierce when angered, that she was the terror of men, women, and children—for she had the strength of an Amazon, with the temper of Medea. She was a fine animal, but quite untameable. *I* was the only person that could at all keep her in any order, and when she saw me really angry (which they tell me is a savage sight), she subsided. But she had a thousand fooleries. In her fazziolo, the dress of the lower orders, she looked beautiful ; but, alas ! she longed for a hat and feathers ; and all I could say or do (and I said much) could not prevent this travestie. I put the first into the fire ; but I got tired of burning them before she did of buying them, so that she made herself a figure—for they did not at all become her.

Then she would have her gowns with a *tail*—like a lady, forsooth ; nothing would serve her but " l'abita colla *coua*," or *cua* (that is the Venetian for " la cola," the tail or train), and as her cursed pronunciation of the word made me laugh, there was an end of all controversy, and she dragged this diabolical tail after her every where.

In the mean time, she beat the women and stopped my letters. I found her one day pondering over one. She used to try to find out by their shape whether they were feminine or no ; and she used to lament her ignorance, and actually studied her alphabet, on purpose (as she declared) to open all letters addressed to me and read their contents.

I must not omit to do justice to her housekeeping qualities. After she came into my house as " donna di governo," the expenses were reduced to less than half, and every body did

their duty better—the apartments were kept in order, and every thing and every body else, except herself.

That she had a sufficient regard for me in her wild way, I had many reasons to believe. I will mention one. In the autumn, one day, going to the Lido with my gondoliers, we were overtaken by a heavy squall, and the gondola put in peril —hats blown away, boat filling, oar lost, tumbling sea, thunder, rain in torrents, night coming, and wind unceasing. On our return, after a tight struggle, I found her on the open steps of the Mocenigo palace, on the Grand Canal, with her great black eyes flashing through her tears, and the long dark hair, which was streaming, drenched with rain, over her brows and breast. She was perfectly exposed to the storm ; and the wind blowing her hair and dress about her thin tall figure, and the lightning flashing round her, and the waves rolling at her feet, made her look like Medea alighted from her chariot, or the Sibyl of the tempest that was rolling around her, the only living thing within hail at that moment except ourselves. On seeing me safe, she did not wait to greet me, as might have been expected, but calling out to me—" Ah ! can' della Madonna, che esto il tempo per andar' al' Lido ? " (Ah ! " dog of the Virgin, is this a time to go to Lido ?) ran into the house, and solaced herself with scolding the boatmen for not foreseeing the " temporale." I am told by the servants that she had only been prevented from coming in a boat to look after me, by the refusal of all the gondoliers of the canal to put out into the harbour in such a moment ; and that then she sate down on the steps in all the thickest of the squall, and would neither be removed nor comforted. Her joy at seeing me again was moderately mixed with ferocity, and gave me the idea of a tigress over her recovered cubs.

But her reign drew near a close. She became quite ungovernable some months after, and a concurrence of complaints, some true, and many false—" a favourite has no friends "—determined me to part with her. I told her quietly that she must return home (she had acquired a sufficient provision for herself and mother, &c. in my service), and she refused to quit

the house. I was firm, she went threatening knives and revenge. I told her that I had seen knives drawn before her time, and that if she chose to begin, there was a knife, and fork also, at her service on the table, and that intimidation would not do. The next day, while I was at dinner, she walked in (having broken open a glass-door that led from the hall below to the staircase, by way of prologue), and advancing straight up to the table, snatched the knife from my hand, cutting me slightly in the thumb in the operation. Whether she meant to use this against herself or me, I know not—probably against neither—but Fletcher seized her by the arms, and disarmed her. I then called my boatmen, and desired them to get the gondola ready, and conduct her to her own house again, seeing carefully that she did herself no mischief by the way. She seemed quite quiet, and walked down stairs. I resumed my dinner.

We heard a great noise, and went out, and met them on the staircase, carrying her up stairs. She had thrown herself into the canal. That she intended to destroy herself, I do not believe : but when we consider the fear women and men who can't swim have of deep or even of shallow water (and the Venetians in particular, though they live on the waves), and that it was also night, and dark, and very cold, it shows that she had a devilish spirit of some sort within her. They had got her out without much difficulty or damage, excepting the salt water she had swallowed, and the wetting she had undergone.

I foresaw her intention to refix herself, and sent for a surgeon, inquiring how many hours it would require to restore her from her agitation ; and he named the time. I then said, " I give you that time, and more if you require it ; but at the expiration of this prescribed period, if *she* does not leave the house, *I* will."

All my people were consternated. They had always been frightened at her, and were now paralysed : they wanted me to apply to the police, to guard myself, &c. &c. like a pack of snivelling servile boobies as they were. I did nothing of the kind, thinking that I might as well end that way as another ; besides, I had been used to savage women, and knew their ways.

I had her sent home quietly after her recovery, and never

saw her since, except twice at the opera, at a distance amongst the audience. She made many attempts to return, but no more violent ones.—And this is the story of Margarita Cogni, as far as it relates to me.

At Venice: Shelley

To John Murray

May 15th, 1819.

The story of Shelley's agitation is true.[1] I can't tell what seized him, for he don't want courage. He was once with me in a gale of wind, in a small boat, right under the rocks between Meillerie and St. Gingo. We were five in the boat—a servant, two boatmen, and ourselves. The sail was mismanaged, and the boat was filling fast. He can't swim. I stripped off my coat, made him strip off his, and take hold of an oar, telling him that I thought (being myself an expert swimmer) I could save him, if he would not struggle when I took hold of him—unless we got smashed against the rocks, which were high and sharp, with an awkward surf on them at that minute. We were then about a hundred yards from shore, and the boat in peril. He answered me with the greatest coolness "that he had no notion of being saved, and that I would have enough to do to save myself, and begged not to trouble me." Luckily, the boat righted, and, baling, we got round a point into St. Gingo, where the inhabitants came down and embraced the boatmen on their escape, the wind having been high enough to tear up some huge trees from the Alps above us, as we saw next day.

[1] This story, as given in the Preface to the "Vampire," is as follows:—"It appears that one evening Lord B., Mr. P. B. Shelley, two ladies, and the gentleman before alluded to, after having perused a German work called Phantasmagoria, began relating ghost stories, when his lordship having recited the beginning of Christabel, then unpublished, the whole took so strong a hold of Mr. Shelley's mind, that he suddenly started up, and ran out of the room. The physician and Lord Byron followed, and discovered him leaning against a mantel-piece, with cold drops of perspiration trickling down his face. After having given him something to refresh him, upon inquiring into the cause of his alarm, they found that his wild imagination having pictured to him the bosom of one of the ladies with eyes (which was reported of a lady in the neighbourhood where he lived), he was obliged to leave the room in order to destroy the impression."

And yet the same Shelley, who was as cool as it was possible to be in such circumstances (of which I am no judge myself, as the chance of swimming naturally gives self-possession when near shore), certainly had the fit of phantasy which Polidori describes, though *not exactly* as he describes it.

At Ravenna: The Countess Guiccioli

To John Murray

June 29th, 1819.

The letters have been forwarded from Venice, but I trust that you will not have waited for further alterations—I will make none. You ask me to spare * * * *—ask the worms. His dust *can* suffer nothing from the truth being spoken—and if it *could*, how did he behave to *me?* You may talk to the wind, which will carry the sound—and to the caves, which will echo you—but *not* to me, on the subject of a * * * who wronged me—whether dead or alive.

I have no time to return you the proofs—publish without them. I am glad you think the poesy good; and as to "thinking of the effect," think *you* of the sale, and leave me to pluck the porcupines who may point their quills at you.

I have been here (at Ravenna) these four weeks, having left Venice a month ago;—I came to see my "Amica," the Countess Guiccioli, who has been, and still continues, very unwell. * * * * * * * * * * *

She is only twenty years old, but not of a strong constitution. * * * * * * * * * *

She has a perpetual cough and an intermittent fever, but bears up most *gallantly* in every sense of the word. Her husband (this is his third wife) is the richest noble of Ravenna, and almost of Romagna; he is also *not* the youngest, being upwards of three-score, but in good preservation. All this will appear strange to you, who do not understand the meridian morality, nor our way of life in such respects, and I cannot at present expound the difference;—but you would find it much the same in these parts. At Faenza there is Lord * * * * with an

opera girl; and at the inn in the same town is a Neapolitan Prince, who serves the wife of the Gonfaloniere of that city. I am on duty here—so you see "Così fan tutti e tutte."

I have my horses here, *saddle* as well as carriage, and ride or drive every day in the forest, the *Pineta*, the scene of Boccaccio's novel, and Dryden's fable of Honoria, &c. &c.; and I see my Dama every day * * *; but I feel seriously uneasy about her health, which seems very precarious. In losing her, I should lose a being who has run great risks on my account, and whom I have every reason to love—but I must not think this possible. I do not know what I *should* do if she died, but I ought to blow my brains out—and I hope that I should. Her husband is a very polite personage, but I wish he would not carry me out in his coach and six, like Whittington and his cat.

At Bologna

To the Countess Guiccioli

August 15th, 1819.

[It was Byron's fancy, during Madame Guiccioli's absence from Bologna, to go daily to her house at his usual hour of visiting her, and there, causing her apartments to be opened, to sit turning over her books, and writing in them. He would then descend into her garden, where he passed hours in musing; and it was on an occasion of this kind, as he stood looking, in a state of unconscious reverie, into one of those fountains so common in the gardens of Italy, that there came suddenly into his mind such desolate fancies, such bodings of the misery he might bring on her he loved, by that doom which (as he has himself written) "makes it fatal to be loved,"[1] that, over-

[1] Oh Love! what is it, in this world of ours,
Which makes it fatal to be loved! ah, why
With cypress branches hast thou wreath'd thy bowers,
And made the best interpreter a sigh!
As those who dote on odours pluck the flowers,
And place them on their breasts—but place to die—
Thus the frail beings we would fondly cherish
Are laid within our bosoms but to perish.

whelmed with his own thoughts, he burst into an agony of tears.

During the same few days he wrote in Madame Guiccioli's copy of " Corinne " the following remarkable note :—]

My dearest Teresa,—I have read this book in your garden ; —my love, you were absent, or else I could not have read it. It is a favourite book of yours, and the writer was a friend of mine. You will not understand these English words, and *others* will not understand them,—which is the reason I have not scrawled them in Italian. But you will recognise the handwriting of him who passionately loved you, and you will divine that, over a book which was yours, he could only think of love. In that word, beautiful in all languages, but most so in yours—*Amor mio*—is comprised my existence here and hereafter. I feel I exist here, and I fear that I shall exist hereafter,—to *what* purpose you will decide ; my destiny rests with you, and you are a woman, eighteen years of age, and two out of a convent. I wish that you had staid there, with all my heart,—or, at least, that I had never met you in your married state.

But all this is too late. I love you, and you love me,—at least, you *say so*, and *act* as if you *did* so, which last is a great consolation in all events. But *I* more than love you, and cannot cease to love you.

Think of me, sometimes, when the Alps and the ocean divide us,—but they never will, unless you *wish* it.

At Venice

To John Murray

November 8th, 1819.

I have been ill these eight days with a tertian fever, caught in the country on horseback in a thunder-storm. Yesterday I had the fourth attack : the two last were very smart, the first day as well as the last being preceded by vomiting. It is the fever of the place and the season. I feel weakened, but not unwell, in the intervals, except headache and lassitude.

Count Guiccioli has arrived in Venice, and has presented

his spouse (who has preceded him two months for her health and the prescriptions of Dr. Aglietti) with a paper of conditions, regulations of hours and conduct, and morals, &c. &c. &c., which he insists on her accepting, and she persists in refusing. I am expressly, it should seem, excluded by this treaty, as an indispensable preliminary ; so that they are in high dissension, and what the result may be, I know not, particularly as they are consulting friends.

To-night, as Countess Guiccioli observed me poring over " Don Juan," she stumbled by mere chance on the 137th stanza of the First Canto, and asked me what it meant. I told her, " Nothing,—but your husband is coming." As I said this in Italian with some emphasis, she started up in a fright, and said, " *Oh, my God, is* he *coming?* " thinking it was *her own*, who either was or ought to have been at the theatre. You may suppose we laughed when she found out the mistake. You will be amused, as I was ;—it happened not three hours ago. * * *

At Ravenna

To Percy Bysshe Shelley

April 26th, 1821.

The child continues doing well, and the accounts are regular and favourable. It is gratifying to me that you and Mrs. Shelley do not disapprove of the step which I have taken, which is merely temporary.

I am very sorry to hear what you say of Keats—is it *actually* true ? I did not think criticism had been so killing. Though I differ from you essentially in your estimate of his performances, I so much abhor all unnecessary pain, that I would rather he had been seated on the highest peak of Parnassus than have perished in such a manner. Poor fellow ! though with such inordinate self-love he would probably have not been very happy. I read the review of " Endymion " in the Quarterly. It was severe,—but surely not so severe as many reviews in that and other journals upon others.

I recollect the effect on me of the Edinburgh on my first poem ; it was rage, and resistance, and redress—but not

despondency nor despair. I grant that those are not amiable feelings ; but, in this world of bustle and broil, and especially in the career of writing, a man should calculate upon his powers of *resistance* before he goes into the arena.

> Expect not life from pain nor danger free,
> Nor deem the doom of man reversed for thee.

You know my opinion of *that second-hand* school of poetry. You also know my high opinion of your own poetry,—because it is of *no* school. I read Cenci—but, besides that I think the *subject* essentially *un*dramatic. I am not an admirer of our old dramatists, *as models*. I deny that the English have hitherto had a drama at all. Your Cenci, however, was a work of power, and poetry. As to *my* drama, pray revenge yourself upon it, by being as free as I have been with yours.

I have not yet got your Prometheus, which I long to see. I have heard nothing of mine, and do not know that it is yet published. I have published a pamphlet on the Pope controversy, which you will not like. Had I known that Keats was dead—or that he was alive and so sensitive—I should have omitted some remarks upon his poetry, to which I was provoked by his *attack* upon *Pope*, and my disapprobation of *his own* style of writing.

You want me to undertake a great Poem—I have not the inclination nor the power. As I grow older, the indifference—*not* to life, for we love it by instinct—but to the stimuli of life, increases. Besides, this late failure of the Italians has latterly disappointed me for many reasons,—some public, some personal. My respects to Mrs. S.

P.S. Could not you and I contrive to meet this summer ? Could not you take a run here *alone ?*

At Ravenna

To John Murray

August 23rd, 1821.

Enclosed are the two acts corrected. With regard to the charges about the shipwreck, I think that I told both you and

Mr. Hobhouse, years ago, that there was not a *single circumstance* of it *not* taken from *fact ;* not, indeed, from any *single* shipwreck, but all from actual facts of different wrecks.[1] Almost all Don Juan is *real* life, either my own, or from people I knew. By the way, much of the description of the *furniture*, in Canto Third, is taken from *Tully's Tripoli* (pray *note this*), and the rest from my own observation. Remember, I never meant to conceal this at all, and have only not stated it, because Don Juan had no preface nor name to it. If you think it worth while to make this statement, do so in your own way. *I* laugh at such charges, convinced that no writer ever borrowed less, or made his materials more his own. Much is coincidence : for instance, Lady Morgan (in a really *excellent* book, I assure you, on Italy) calls Venice an *ocean Rome :* I have the very same expression in Foscari, and yet *you* know that the play was written months ago, and sent to England : the " Italy " I received only on the 16th instant.

Your friend, like the public, is not aware, that my dramatic simplicity is *studiously* Greek, and must continue so : *no* reform ever succeeded at first. I admire the old English dramatist ; but this is quite another field, and has nothing to do with theirs. I want to make a *regular* English drama, no matter whether for the stage or not, which is not my object,— but a *mental theatre*.

P.S.—Can't accept your courteous offer.

For Orford and for Waldegrave
You give much more than me you gave :
Which is not fairly to behave,
My Murray.

Because if a live dog, 'tis said,
Be worth a lion fairly sped,
A live lord must be worth *two* dead,
My Murray.

[1] One of the charges of plagiarism brought against him by some scribblers of the day was founded on his having sought in the authentic records of real shipwrecks those materials out of which he has worked his own powerful description in the Second Canto of Don Juan.—T. M.

And if, as the opinion goes,
Verse hath a better sale than prose—
Certes, I should have more than those,
My Murray.

But now this sheet is nearly cramm'd,
So, if *you will, I* sha'n't be shamm'd,
And if you *won't, you* may be damn'd,
My Murray.

At Ravenna

To Tom Moore

September 19th, 1821.

I am in all the sweat, dust, and blasphemy of an universal packing of all my things, furniture, &c. for Pisa, whither I go for the winter. The cause has been the exile of all my fellow Carbonics, and, amongst them, of the whole family of Madame G., who, you know, was divorced from her husband last week, " on account of P. P., clerk of this parish," and who is obliged to join her father and relatives, now in exile there, to avoid being shut up in a monastery, because the Pope's decree of separation required her to reside in *casa paterna*, or else, for decorum's sake, in a convent. As I could not say, with Hamlet, " Get thee to a nunnery," I am preparing to follow them.

It is awful work, this love, and prevents all a man's projects of good or glory. I wanted to go to Greece lately (as every thing seems up here) with her brother, who is a very fine, brave fellow (I have seen him put to the proof), and wild about liberty. But the tears of a woman who has left her husband for a man, and the weakness of one's own heart are paramount to these projects, and I can hardly indulge them.

We were divided in choice between Switzerland and Tuscany, and I gave my vote for Pisa, as nearer the Mediterranean, which I love for the sake of the shores which it washes, and for my young recollections of 1809. Switzerland is a curst selfish, swinish country of brutes, placed in the most romantic region of the world. I never could bear the inhabitants, and still less their English visitors ; for which reason, after writing

for some information about houses, upon hearing that there was a colony of English all over the cantons of Geneva, &c., I immediately gave up the thought, and persuaded the Gambas to do the same.

At Ravenna

To Tom Moore

September—no—October 1st, 1821.

I have written to you lately, both in prose and verse, at great length, to Paris and London. I presume that Mrs. Moore, or whoever is your Paris deputy, will forward my packets to you in London.

I am setting off for Pisa, if a slight incipient intermittent fever do not prevent me. I fear it is not strong enough to give Murray much chance of realizing his thirteens again. I hardly should regret it, I think, provided you raised your price upon him—as what Lady Holderness (my sister's grandmother, a Dutchwoman) used to call Augusta, her *Residee Legatoo*—so as to provide for us all; *my* bones with a splendid and larmoyante edition, and you with double what is extractable during my lifetime.

I have a strong presentiment that (bating some out of the way accident) you will survive me. The difference of eight years, or whatever it is, between our ages, is nothing. I do not feel (nor am, indeed, anxious to feel) the principle of life in me tend to longevity. My father and mother died, the one at thirty-five or six, and the other at forty-five; and Doctor Rush, or somebody else, says that nobody lives long, without having *one parent*, at least, an old stager.

I *should*, to be sure, like to see out my eternal mother-in-law, not so much for her heritage, but from my natural antipathy. But the indulgence of this natural desire is too much to expect from the Providence who presides over old women. I bore you with all this about lives, because it has been put in my way by a calculation of insurances which Murray has sent me. I *really think* you should have more, if I evaporate within a reasonable time.

I wonder if my " Cain " has got safe to England. I have written since about sixty stanzas of a poem, in octave stanzas (in the Pulci style, which the fools in England think was invented by Whistlecraft—it is as old as the hills in Italy) called " The Vision of Judgment, by Quevedo Redivivus," with this motto—

> A Daniel come to *judgment*, yea, a Daniel :
> I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word.

In this it is my intent to put the said George's Apotheosis in a Whig point of view, not forgetting the Poet Laureate for his preface and his other demerits.

I am just got to the pass where Saint Peter, hearing that the royal defunct had opposed Catholic Emancipation, rises up and, interrupting Satan's oration, declares *he* will change places with Cerberus sooner than let him into heaven, while *he* has the keys thereof.

I must go and ride, though rather feverish and chilly. It is the ague season ; but the agues do me rather good than harm. The feel after the *fit* is as if one had got rid of one's body for good and all.

The gods go with you !—Address to Pisa.

P.S.—Since I came back I feel better, though I staid out too late for this malaria season, under the thin crescent of a very young moon, and got off my horse to walk in an avenue with a Signora for an hour. I thought of you and

> When at eve thou rovest
> By the star thou lovest.

But it was not in a romantic mood, as I should have been once ; and yet it was a *new* woman (that is, new to me), and, of course, expected to be made love to. But I merely made a few commonplace speeches. I feel as your poor friend Curran said, be ore his death, " a mountain of lead upon my heart," which I believe to be constitutional, and that nothing will remove it but the same remedy.

At Pisa

To John Murray

December 4th, 1821.

By extracts in the English papers,—in your holy ally, Galignani's "Messenger,"—I perceive that "the two greatest examples of human vanity in the present age" are, firstly, "the ex-Emperor Napoleon," and, secondly, "his lordship, &c., the noble poet," meaning your humble servant, "poor guiltless I."

Poor Napoleon! he little dreamed to what vile comparisons the turn of the wheel would reduce him!

I have got here into a famous old feudal palazzo, on the Arno, large enough for a garrison, with dungeons below and cells in the walls, and so full of *ghosts*, that the learned Fletcher (my valet) has begged leave to change his room, and then refused to occupy his *new* room, because there were more ghosts there than in the other. It is quite true that there are most extraordinary noises (as in all old buildings), which have terrified the servants so as to incommode me extremely. There is one place where people were evidently *walled up*, for there is but one possible passage, broken through the wall, and then meant to be closed again upon the inmate. The house belonged to the Lanfranchi family (the same mentioned by Ugolino in his dream, as his persecutor with Sismondi), and has had a fierce owner or two in its time. The staircase, &c. is said to have been built by Michael Angelo. It is not yet cold enough for a fire. What a climate!

I am, however, bothered about these spectres (as they say the last occupants were, too), of whom I have as yet seen nothing, nor, indeed, heard (*myself*); but all the other ears have been regaled by all kinds of supernatural sounds. The first night I thought I heard an odd noise, but it has not been repeated. I have now been here more than a month.

AT PISA

To John Murray

April 22nd, 1822.

You will regret to hear that I have received intelligence of the death of my daughter Allegra of a fever, in the convent of Bagna Cavallo, where she was placed for the last year, to commence her education. It is a heavy blow for many reasons, but must be borne, with time.

It is my present intention to send her remains to England for sepulture in Harrow church (where I once hoped to have laid my own), and this is my reason for troubling you with this notice. I wish the funeral to be very private. The body is embalmed, and in lead. It will be embarked from Leghorn. Would you have any objection to give the proper directions on its arrival?

P.S. You are aware that Protestants are not allowed holy ground in Catholic countries.

MONTENERO, NEAR LEGHORN.

To John Murray

May 26th, 1822.

The body is embarked, in what ship I know not, neither could I enter into the details; but the Countess G. G. has had the goodness to give the necessary orders to Mr. Dunn, who superintends the embarkation, and will write to you. I wish it to be buried in Harrow church.

There is a spot in the church*yard*, near the footpath, on the brow of the hill looking towards Windsor, and a tomb under a large tree (bearing the name of Peachie, or Peachey), where I used to sit for hours and hours when a boy. This was my favourite spot; but as I wish to erect a tablet to her memory, the body had better be deposited in the church. Near the door, on the left hand as you enter, there is a monument with a tablet containing these words:

> When Sorrow weeps o'er Virtue's sacred dust,
> Our tears become us, and our grief is just:
> Such were the tears she shed, who grateful pays
> This last sad tribute of her love and praise.

I recollect them (after seventeen years), not from any thing remarkable in them, but because from my seat in the gallery I had generally my eyes turned towards that monument. As near it as convenient I could wish Allegra to be buried, and on the wall a marble tablet placed, with these words :

In Memory of
Allegra,
Daughter of G. G. Lord Byron,
who died at Bagna Cavallo,
in Italy, April 20th, 1822,
aged five years and three months.

" I shall go to her, but she shall not return to me."
2d Samuel, xii. 23.

The funeral I wish to be as private as is consistent with decency ; and I could hope that Henry Drury will, perhaps, read the service over her. If he should decline it, it can be done by the usual minister for the time being. I do not know that I need add more just now.

Shelley's Death
At Pisa
To Tom Moore

August 8th, 1822.

You will have heard by this time that Shelley and another gentleman (Capitan Williams) were drowned about a month ago (a *month* yesterday), in a squall off the Gulf of Spezia. There is thus another man gone, about whom the world was ill-naturedly, and ignorantly, and brutally mistaken. It will, perhaps, do him justice *now*, when he can be no better for it.[1]

At Pisa
To Tom Moore

August 27th, 1822.

The other day at Viareggio, I thought proper to swim off to my schooner (the Bolivar) in the offing, and thence to shore

[1] In a letter to Mr. Murray, of an earlier date, which has been omitted to avoid repetitions, he says on the same subject :—" You were all mistaken about Shelley, who was, without exception, the *best* and least selfish man I ever knew."—T. M.

again—about three miles, or better, in all. As it was at mid-day, under a broiling sun, the consequence has been a feverish attack, and my whole skin's coming off, after going through the process of one large continuous blister, raised by the sun and sea together. I have suffered much pain ; not being able to lie on my back, or even side ; for my shoulders and arms were equally St. Bartholomewed. But it is over,—and I have got a new skin, and am as glossy as a snake in its new suit.

We have been burning the bodies of Shelley and Williams on the sea-shore, to render them fit for removal and regular interment. You can have no idea what an extraordinary effect such a funeral pile has, on a desolate shore, with mountains in the background and the sea before, and the singular appearance the salt and frankincense gave to the flame. All of Shelley was consumed, except his *heart*, which would not take the flame, and is now preserved in spirits of wine.

At Genoa

To John Murray

9*bre*, 1822.

I hope that you have a milder winter than we have had here. We have had inundations worthy of the Trent or Po, and the conductor (Franklin's) of my house was struck (or supposed to be stricken) by a thunderbolt. I was so near the window that I was dazzled and my eyes hurt for several minutes, and every body in the house felt an electric shock at the moment. Madame Guiccioli was frightened, as you may suppose.

I have thought since that your bigots would have " saddled me with a judgment " (as Thwackum did Square when he bit his tongue in talking metaphysics), if any thing had happened of consequence. These fellows always forget Christ in their Christianity, and what he said when " the tower of Siloam fell."

To-day is the 9th, and the 10th is my surviving daughter's birthday. I have ordered, as a regale, a mutton chop and a bottle of ale. She is seven years old, I believe. Did I ever tell

you that the day I came of age I dined on eggs and bacon and a bottle of ale? For once in a way they are my favourite dish and drinkable, but as neither of them agree with me, I never use them but on great jubilees—once in four or five years or so.

I see somebody represents the Hunts and Mrs. Shelley as living in my house: it is a falsehood. They reside at some distance, and I do not see them twice in a month. I have not met Mr. Hunt a dozen times since I came to Genoa, or near it.

LEIGH HUNT

To Mrs. ——

* * * * * * *

I presume that you, at least, know enough of me to be sure that I could have no intention to insult Hunt's poverty. On the contrary, I honour him for it; for I know what it is, having been as much embarrassed as ever he was, without perceiving aught in it to diminish an honourable man's self-respect. If you mean to say that, had he been a wealthy man, I would have joined in this Journal, I answer in the negative. * * * I engaged in the Journal from good-will towards him, added to respect for his character, literary and personal; and no less for his political courage, as well as regret for his present circumstances; I did this in the hope that he might, with the same aid from literary friends of literary contributions (which is requisite for all Journals of a mixed nature), render himself independent.

* * * * * * *

I have always treated him, in our personal intercourse, with such scrupulous delicacy, that I have forborne intruding advice, which I thought might be disagreeable, lest he should impute it to what is called "taking advantage of a man's situation."

As to friendship, it is a propensity in which my genius is very limited. I do not know the *male* human being, except Lord Clare, the friend of my infancy, for whom I feel any thing that deserves the name. All my others are men of the

world friendships. I did not even feel it for Shelley, however much I admired and esteemed him ; so that you see not even vanity could bribe me into it, for, of all men, Shelley thought highest of my talents,—and, perhaps, of my disposition.

I will do my duty by my intimates, upon the principle of doing as you would be done by. I have done so, I trust, in most instances. I may be pleased with their conversation—rejoice in their success—be glad to do them service, or to receive their counsel and assistance in return. But, as for friends and friendship, I have (as I already said) named the only remaining male for whom I feel any thing of the kind, excepting, perhaps, Thomas Moore. I have had, and may have still, a thousand friends, as they are called, in *life*, who are like one's partners in the waltz of this world, not much remembered when the ball is over, though very pleasant for the time. Habit, business, and companionship in pleasure or in pain, are links of a similar kind, and the same faith in politics is another.

At Pisa

To Lady Byron

(*To the care of the Hon. Mrs. Leigh, London*)

November 17th, 1821.

I have to acknowledge the receipt of " Ada's hair," which is very soft and pretty, and nearly as dark already as mine was at twelve years old, if I may judge from what I recollect of some in Augusta's possession, taken at that age. But it don't curl—perhaps from its being let grow.

I also thank you for the inscription of the date and name, and I will tell you why :—I believe that they are the only two or three words of your handwriting in my possession. For your letters I returned, and except the two words, or rather the one word, " Household," written twice in an old account-book, I have no other. I burnt your last note, for two reasons : —1stly, it was written in a style not very agreeable ; and, 2ndly, I wished to take your word without documents, which are the worldly resources of suspicious people.

I suppose that this note will reach you somewhere about Ada's birthday—the 10th of December, I believe. She will then be six, so that in about twelve more I shall have some chance of meeting her; perhaps sooner, if I am obliged to go to England by business or otherwise. Recollect, however, one thing, either in distance or nearness;—every day which keeps us asunder should, after so long a period, rather soften our mutual feelings, which must always have one rallying-point as long as our child exists, which I presume we both hope will be long after either of her parents.

The time which has elapsed since the separation has been considerably more than the whole brief period of our union, and the not much longer one of our prior acquaintance. We both made a bitter mistake; but now it is over and irrevocably so. For, at thirty-three on my part, and a few years less on yours, though it is no very extended period of life, still it is one when the habits and thoughts are generally so formed as to admit of no modification; and as we could not agree when younger, we should with difficulty do so now.

I say all this, because I own to you, that, notwithstanding every thing, I considered our reunion as not impossible for more than a year after the separation;—but then I gave up the hope entirely and for ever. But this very impossibility of reunion seems to me at least a reason why, on all the few points of discussion which can arise between us, we should preserve the courtesies of life, and as much of its kindness as people who are never to meet may preserve perhaps more easily than nearer connexions. For my own part, I am violent, but not malignant; for only fresh provocations can awaken my resentments. To you, who are colder and more concentrated, I would just hint, that you may sometimes mistake the depth of a cold anger for dignity, and a worse feeling for duty. I assure you that I bear you *now* (whatever I may have done) no resentment whatever. Remember, that *if you have injured me* in aught, this forgiveness is something; and that, if I have *injured you*, it is something more still, if it be true, as the moralists say, that the most offending are the least forgiving.

Whether the offence has been solely on my side, or reciprocal, or on yours chiefly, I have ceased to reflect upon any but two things,—viz. that you are the mother of my child, and that we shall never meet again. I think if you also consider the two corresponding points with reference to myself, it will be better for all three.

Yours ever,
NOEL BYRON.

HIS SUPERSTITIONS

To the Countess of Blessington

ALBARO, *June 2nd*, 1823.

MY DEAR LADY B * *,

I am *superstitious*, and have recollected that memorials with a *point* are of less fortunate augury; I will, therefore, request you to accept, instead of the *pin*, the enclosed chain, which is of so slight a value that you need not hesitate. As you wished for something *worn*, I can only say, that it has been worn oftener and longer than the other. It is of Venetian manufacture; and the only peculiarity about it is, that it could only be obtained at or from Venice. At Genoa they have none of the same kind. I also enclose a ring, which I would wish *Alfred* to keep; it is too large to *wear;* but is formed of *lava*, and so far adapted to the fire of his years and character. You will perhaps have the goodness to acknowledge the receipt of this note, and send back the pin (for good luck's sake), which I shall value much more for having been a night in your custody.

P.S. I hope your *nerves* are well to-day, and will continue to flourish.

VOYAGE TO GREECE

To Mr. Bowring

July 7th, 1823.

We sail on the 12th for Greece.—I have had a letter from Mr. Blaquiere, too long for present transcription, but very

satisfactory. The Greek Government expects me without delay.

In conformity to the desires of Mr. B. and other correspondents in Greece, I have to suggest, with all deference to the Committee, that a remittance of even "*ten thousand pounds only*" (Mr. B.'s expression) would be of the greatest service to the Greek Government at present. I have also to recommend strongly the attempt of a loan, for which there will be offered a sufficient security by deputies now on their way to England. In the mean time, I hope that the Committee will be enabled to do something effectual.

For my own part, I mean to carry up, in cash or credits, above eight, and nearly nine thousand pounds sterling, which I am enabled to do by funds I have in Italy, and credits in England. Of this sum I must necessarily reserve a portion for the subsistence of myself and suite; the rest I am willing to apply in the manner which seems most likely to be useful to the cause—having of course some guarantee or assurance, that it will not be misapplied to any individual speculation.

If I remain in Greece, which will mainly depend upon the presumed probable utility of my presence there, and of the opinion of the Greeks themselves as to its propriety—in short, if I am welcome to them, I shall continue, during my residence at least, to apply such portions of my income, present and future, as may forward the object—that is to say, what I can spare for that purpose. Privations I can, or at least could once bear—abstinence I am accustomed to—and, as to fatigue, I was once a tolerable traveller. What I may be now, I cannot tell—but I will try.

At Leghorn

To Goëthe

July 24th, 1823.

Illustrious Sir,

I cannot thank you as you ought to be thanked for the lines which my young friend, Mr. Sterling, sent me of yours; and it would but ill become me to pretend to exchange verses

with him who, for fifty years, has been the undisputed sovereign of European literature. You must therefore accept my most sincere acknowledgments in prose—and in hasty prose too ; for I am at present on my voyage to Greece once more, and surrounded by hurry and bustle, which hardly allow a moment even to gratitude and admiration to express themselves.

I sailed from Genoa some days ago, was driven back by a gale of wind, and have since sailed again and arrived here, " Leghorn," this morning, to receive on board some Greek passengers for their struggling country.

Here also I found your lines and Mr. Sterling's letter, and I could not have had a more favourable omen, a more agreeable surprise, than a word of Goethe, written by his own hand.

I am returning to Greece, to see if I can be of any little use there : if ever I come back, I will pay a visit to Weimar, to offer the sincere homage of one of the many millions of your admirers. I have the honour to be, ever and most,

Yours obliged,

Noel Byron.

At Cephalonia

To Madame Guiccioli

October 7th.

Pietro has told you all the gossip of the island,—our earthquakes, our politics, and present abode in a pretty village. As his opinions and mine on the Greeks are nearly similar, I need say little on that subject. I was a fool to come here ; but, being here, I must see what is to be done.

October .

We are still in Cephalonia, waiting for news of a more accurate description ; for all is contradiction and division in the reports of the state of the Greeks. I shall fulfil the object of my mission from the Committee, and then return into Italy. For it does not seem likely that, as an individual, I can be of use to them ;—at least no other foreigner has yet appeared to be so, nor does it seem likely that any will at present.

Pray be as cheerful and tranquil as you can ; and be assured that there is nothing here that can excite any thing but a wish to be with you again,—though we are very kindly treated by the English here of all descriptions. Of the Greeks, I can't say much good hitherto, and I do not like to speak ill of them, though they do of one another.

October 29th.

You may be sure that the moment I can join you again will be as welcome to me as any period of our recollection. There is nothing very attractive here to divide my attention ; but I must attend to the Greek cause, both from honour and inclination. Messrs. B. and T. are both in the Morea, where they have been very well received, and both of them write in good spirits and hopes. I am anxious to hear how the Spanish cause will be arranged, as I think it may have an influence on the Greek contest. I wish that both were fairly and favourably settled, that I might return to Italy, and talk over with you *our*, or rather Pietro's adventures, some of which are rather amusing, as also some of the incidents of our voyages and travels. But I reserve them in the hope that we may laugh over them together at no very distant period.

At Cephalonia

To Mr. Bowring

*1obe*r *7th*, 1823.

The public success of the Greeks has been considerable,—Corinth taken, Missolonghi nearly safe, and some ships in the Archipelago taken from the Turks ; but there is not only dissention in the Morea, but *civil war*, by the latest accounts ; to what extent we do not yet know, but hope trifling.

For six weeks I have been expecting the fleet, *which has not arrived*, though I have, at the request of the Greek Government, advanced—that is, prepared, and have in hand two hundred thousand piastres (deducting the commission and banker's charges) of my own monies to forward their projects. The Suliotes (now in Arcanania) are very anxious that I should take them under my directions, and go over and put things to rights

in the Morea, which, without a force, seems impracticable ; and really, though very reluctant (as my letters will have shown you) to take such a measure, there seems hardly any milder remedy. However, I will not do any thing rashly, and have only continued here so long in the hope of seeing things reconciled, and have done all in my power thereto. Had *I gone sooner, they would have forced me into one party or other*, and I doubt as much now ; but we will do our best.

At Cephalonia

To Mr. Bowring

October 13th, 1823.

Since I wrote to you on the 10th instant, the long-desired squadron has arrived in the waters of Missolonghi, and intercepted two Turkish corvettes—ditto transports—destroying or taking all four—except some of the crews escaped on shore in Ithaca—and an unarmed vessel, with passengers, chased into a port on the opposite side of Cephalonia. The Greeks had fourteen sail, the Turks *four*—but the odds don't matter—the victory will make a very good *puff*, and be of some advantage besides. I expect momentarily advices from Prince Mavrocordato, who is on board, and has (I understand) despatches from the Legislature for me ; in consequence of which, after paying the squadron (for which I have prepared, and am preparing), I shall probably join him at sea or on shore.

At Cephalonia

To Mr. Bowring

10bre 26th, 1823.

Little need be added to the enclosed, which arrived this day, except that I embark to-morrow for Missolonghi. The intended operations are detailed in the annexed documents. I have only to request that the Committee will use every exertion to forward our views by all its influence and credit.

I have also to request you *personally* from myself to urge my friend and trustee, Douglas Kinnaird (from whom I have

not heard these four months nearly), to forward to me all the resources of my *own* we can muster for the ensuing year, since it is no time to ménager *purse*, or, perhaps, *person*. I have advanced, and am advancing, all that I have in hand, but I shall require all that can be got together—and (if Douglas has completed the sale of Rochdale, *that* and my year's income for next year ought to form a good round sum)—as you may perceive that there will be little cash of their own amongst the Greeks (unless they get the Loan), it is the more necessary that those of their friends who have any should risk it.

The supplies of the Committee are, some, useful, and all excellent in their kind, but occasionally hardly *practical* enough, in the present state of Greece ; for instance, the mathematical instruments are thrown away—none of the Greeks know a problem from a poker—we must conquer first, and plan afterwards. The use of the trumpets too may be doubted, unless Constantinople were Jericho, for the Hellenists have no ears for bugles, and you must send us somebody to listen to them.

We will do our best—and I pray you to stir your English hearts at home to more *general* exertion ; for my part, I will stick by the cause while a plank remains which can be *honourably* clung to. If I quit it, it will be by the Greeks' conduct, and not the Holy Allies, or the holier Mussulmans—but let us hope better things.

At Cephalonia

To Tom Moore

December 27th, 1823.

I embark for Missolonghi to join Mavrocordato in four-and-twenty hours. The state of parties (but it were a long story) has kept me here till *now* ; but now that Mavrocordato (their Washington, or their Kosciusko) is employed again, I can act with a *safe conscience*. I carry money to pay the squadron, &c., and I have influence with the Suliotes, *supposed* sufficient to keep them in harmony with some of the dissentients ;—for there are plenty of differences, but trifling.

It is imagined that we shall attempt either Patras, or the

castles on the Straits ; and it seems, by most accounts, that the Greeks,—at any rate, the Suliotes, who are in affinity with me of " bread and salt,"—expect that I should march with them, and—be it even so ! If any thing in the way of fever, fatigue, famine, or otherwise, should cut short the middle age of a brother warbler,—like Garcilasso de la Vega, Kleist, Korner, Kutoffski (a Russian nightingale—see Bowring's Anthology), or Thersander, or,—or, somebody else—but never mind—I pray you to remember me in your " smiles and wine."

I have hopes that the cause will triumph ; but, whether it does or no, still " Honour must be minded as strictly as a milk diet." I trust to observe both.

On Board Ship

To the Honourable Colonel Stanhope

Scrofer (or some such name), on board a Cephaloniot Mistico.

December 31st, 1823.

We are just arrived here, that is, part of my people and I, with some things, &c., and which it may be as well not to specify in a letter (which has a risk of being intercepted, perhaps) ;—but Gamba, and my horses, negro, steward, and the press, and all the Committee things, also some eight thousand dollars of mine (but never mind, we have more left, do you understand ?) are taken by the Turkish frigates, and my party and myself, in another boat, have had a narrow escape last night (being close under their stern and hailed, but we would not answer, and bore away), as well as this morning. Here we are, with sun and clearing weather, within a pretty little port enough ; but whether our Turkish friends may not send in their boats and take us out (for we have no arms except two carbines and some pistols, and, I suspect, not more than four fighting people on board) is another question, especially if we remain long here, since we are blocked out of Missolonghi by the direct entrance.

You had better send my friend George Drake (Draco), and a body of Suliotes, to escort us by land or by the canals, with all convenient speed. Gamba and our Bombard are taken into

Patras, I suppose ; and we must take a turn at the Turks to get them out : but where the devil is the fleet gone ?—the Greek, I mean ; leaving us to get in without the least intimation to take heed that the Moslems were out again.

Make my respects to Mavrocordato, and say, that I am here at his disposal. I am uneasy at being here ; not so much on my own account as on that of a Greek boy with me, for you know what his fate would be ; and I would sooner cut him in pieces and myself too than have him taken out by those barbarians. We are all very well.

DRAGOMESTRI

To Mr. Muir

January 2nd, 1824.

I wish you many returns of the season and happiness therewithal. Gamba and the Bombard (there is a strong reason to believe) are carried into Patras by a Turkish frigate, which we saw chase them at dawn on the 31st ; we had been close under the stern in the night, believing her a Greek till within pistol shot, and only escaped by a miracle of all the Saints (our captain says), and truly I am of his opinion, for we should never have got away of ourselves. They were signalizing their consort with lights, and had illuminated the ship between decks, and were shouting like a mob ;—but then why did they not fire ? Perhaps they took us for a Greek brûlot, and were afraid of kindling us—they had no colours flying even at dawn nor after.

At daybreak my boat was on the coast, but the wind unfavourable for *the port ;*—a large vessel with the wind in her favour standing between us and the Gulf, and another in chase of the Bombard about 12 miles off or so. Soon after they stood (i.e. the Bombard and frigate) apparently towards Patras, and a Zantiote boat making signals to us from the shore to get away. Away we went before the wind, and ran into a creek called Scrofes, I believe, where I landed Luke [1] and another

[1] A Greek youth whom he had brought with him, in his suite, from Cephalonia.

(as Luke's life was in most danger), with some money for themselves, and a letter for Stanhope, and sent them up the country to Missolonghi, where they would be in safety, as the place where we were could be assailed by armed boats in a moment, and Gamba had all our arms except two carbines, a fowling-piece, and some pistols.

In less than an hour the vessel in chase neared us, and we dashed out again, and showing our stern (our boat sails very well), got in before night to Dragomestri, where we now are. But where is the Greek fleet ? I don't know—do you ! I told our master of the boat that I was inclined to think the two large vessels (there were none else in sight) Greeks. But he answered " they are too large—why don't they show their colours ? " and his account was confirmed, be it true or false, by several boats which we met or passed, as we could not at any rate have got in with that wind without beating about for a long time ; and as there was much property, and some lives to risk (the boy's especially) without any means of defence, it was necessary to let our boatmen have their own way.

I despatched yesterday another messenger to Missolonghi for an escort, but we have yet no answer. We are here (those of my boat) for the fifth day without taking our clothes off, and sleeping in deck in all weathers, but are all very well, and in good spirits. It is to be supposed that the Government will send, for their own sakes, an escort, as I have 16,000 dollars on board, the greater part for their service. I had (besides personal property to the amount of about 5,000 more) 8,000 dollars in specie of my own, without reckoning the Committee's stores, so that the Turks will have a good thing of it, if the prize be good.

I regret the detention of Gamba, &c. but the rest we can make up again, so tell Hancock to set my bills into cash as soon as possible, and Corgialegno to prepare the remainder of my credit with Messrs. Webb to be turned into monies. I shall remain here, unless something extraordinary occurs, till Mavrocordato sends, and then go on, and act according to circumstances. My respects to the two colonels, and remembrances to all

friends. Tell " *Ultima Analise* " that his friend Raidi did not make his appearance with the brig, though I think that he might as well have spoken with us *in* or *off* Zante, to give us a gentle hint of what we had to expect.

Yours ever affectionately,
N. B.

P.S. Excuse my scrawl on account of the pen and the frosty morning at daybreak. I write in haste, a boat starting for Kalamo. I do not know whether the detention of the Bombard (if she be detained, for I cannot swear to it, and I can only judge from appearances, and what all these fellows say) be an affair of the Government, and neutrality, and, &c.—but she *was stopped at least* 12 miles distant from any port, and had all her papers regular from *Zante* for *Kalamo*, and *we also*. I did not land at Zante, being anxious to lose as little time as possible, but Sir F. S. came off to invite me, &c. and every body was as kind as could be, even in Cephalonia.

At Missolonghi

To Charles Hancock

January 13th, 1824.

Many thanks for yours of the 5th ; ditto to Muir for his. You will have heard that Gamba and my vessel got out of the hands of the Turks safe and intact ; nobody knows well how or why, for there's a mystery in the story somewhat melodramatic. Captain Valsamachi has, I take it, spun a long yarn by this time in Argostoli. I attribute their release entirely to Saint Dionisio of Zante, and the Madonna of the Rock, near Cephalonia.

The adventures of my separate luck were also not finished at Dragomestri ; we were conveyed out by some Greek gunboats, and found the Leonidas brig-of-war at sea to look after us. But blowing weather coming on, we were driven on the rocks *twice* in the passage of the Scrophes, and the dollars had another narrow escape. Two thirds of the crew got ashore

over the bowsprit : the rocks were rugged enough, but water very deep close in shore, so that she was, after much swearing and some exertion, got off again, and away we went with a third of our crew, leaving the rest on a desolate island, where they might have been now, had not one of the gunboats taken them off, for we were in no condition to take them off again.

Tell Muir that Dr. Bruno did not show much fight on the occasion, for besides stripping to his flannel waistcoat, and running about like a rat in an emergency, when I was talking to a Greek boy (the brother of the Greek girls in Argostoli), and telling him of the fact that there was no danger for the passengers, whatever there might be for the vessel, and assuring him that I could save both him and myself without difficulty (though he can't swim), as the water, though deep, was not very rough,—the wind *not* blowing *right* on shore (it was a blunder of the Greeks who missed stays),—the Doctor exclaimed, " Save *him*, indeed ! by G—d ! save *me* rather—I'll be first if I can "—a piece of egotism which he pronounced with such emphatic simplicity as to set all who had leisure to hear him laughing, and in a minute after the vessel drove off again after striking twice. She sprung a small leak, but nothing further happened, except that the captain was very nervous afterwards.

To be brief, we had bad weather almost always, though not contrary ; slept on deck in the wet generally for seven or eight nights, but never was in better health (I speak personally)—so much so, that I actually bathed for a quarter of an hour on the evening of the fourth instant in the sea (to kill the fleas, and other &c.) and was all the better for it.

We were received at Missolonghi with all kinds of kindness and honours ; and the sight of the fleet saluting, &c. and the crowds and different costumes was really picturesque. We think of undertaking an expedition soon, and I expect to be ordered with the Suliotes to join the army.

All well at present. We found Gamba already arrived, and every thing in good condition. Remember me to all friends.

AT MISSOLONGHI

To His Highness Yussuff Pacha

January 23rd, 1824.

HIGHNESS!

A vessel, in which a friend and some domestics of mine were embarked, was detained a few days ago, and released by order of your Highness. I have now to thank you; not for liberating the vessel, which, as carrying a neutral flag, and being under British protection, no one had a right to detain; but for having treated my friends with so much kindness while they were in your hands.

In the hope, therefore, that it may not be altogether displeasing to your Highness, I have requested the governor of this place to release four Turkish prisoners, and he has humanely consented to do so. I lose no time, therefore, in sending them back, in order to make as early a return as I could for your courtesy on the late occasion. These prisoners are liberated without any conditions; but, should the circumstances find a place in your recollection, I venture to beg, that your Highness will treat such Greeks as may henceforth fall into your hands with humanity; more especially since the horrors of war are sufficiently great in themselves, without being aggravated by wanton cruelties on either side.

NOEL BYRON.

AT MISSOLONGHI

To Mr. Barff

February 21st.

I am a good deal better, though of course weakly; the leeches took too much blood from my temples the day after, and there was some difficulty in stopping it, but I have since been up daily, and out in boats or on horseback. To day I have taken a warm bath and live as temperately as can well be without any liquid but water, and without animal food.

Besides the four Turks sent to Patras, I have obtained the release of four-and-twenty women and children, and sent

them at my own expense to Prevesa, that the English Consul-General may consign them to their relations. I did this by their own desire. Matters here are a little embroiled with the Suliotes and foreigners, &c., but I still hope better things, and will stand by the cause as long as my health and circumstances will permit me to be supposed useful. I am obliged to support the Government here for the present.

AT MISSOLONGHI

To Mr. Barff

February 23rd.

My health seems improving, especially from riding and the warm bath. Six Englishmen will be soon in quarantine at Zante ; they are artificers, and have had enough of Greece in fourteen days. If you could recommend them to a passage home, I would thank you ; they are good men enough, but do not quite understand the little discrepancies in these countries, and are not used to see shooting and slashing in a domestic quiet way, or (as it forms here) a part of house-keeping.

If they should want any thing during their quarantine, you can advance them not more than a dollar a day (amongst them) for that period, to purchase them some little extras as comforts (as they are quite out of their element). I cannot afford them more at present.

AT MISSOLONGHI

To Mr. Barff

April 6th.

Since I wrote, we have had some tumult here with the citizens and Cariascachi's people, and all are under arms, our boys and all. They nearly fired on me and fifty of my lads, by mistake, as we were taking our usual excursion into the country. To-day matters are settled or subsiding ; but about an hour ago, the father-in-law of the landlord of the house where I am lodged (one of the Primates the said landlord is) was arrested for high treason.

They are in conclave still with Mavrocordato ; and we have a number of new faces from the hills, come to assist, they say. Gunboats and batteries all ready, &c.

The row has had one good effect—it has put them on the alert. What is to become of the father-in-law, I do not know ; nor what he has done, exactly : but

> 'Tis a very fine thing to be father-in-law
> To a very magnificent three-tail'd bashaw,

as the man in Bluebeard says and sings. I wrote to you upon matters at length, some days ago ; the letter, or letters, you will receive with this. We are desirous to hear more of the Loan ; and it is some time since I have had any letters (at least of an interesting description) from England, excepting one of 4th February, from Bowring (of no great importance). My latest dates are of 9bre, or of the 6th 10bre, four months exactly. I hope you get on well in the islands : here most of us are, or have been, more or less indisposed, natives as well as foreigners.

INDEX OF FIRST LINES